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Cover photo: Corbis Images

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UNEXPECTED REUNION

While delivering Operation Comfort Warriors donations to Salisbury VA Medical Center on Aug. 25, Keith Melick of Post 23 in Leavenworth, Kan., began swapping war stories with Roy Wilkins, right, of Winston-Salem, N.C. Within minutes, they realized that Melick was the medic who saved Wilkins' life in Afghanistan in 2004 after he lost his leg in an IED explosion.

Read this and more stories from Charlotte online:

www.legion.org/convention

Photo by Lucas Carter

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.3 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 14,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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'Betrayed'

I find Ken Olsen's article (September) about the West Los Angeles VA heartbreaking. I wonder why in God's name this awful injustice to veterans needing help has been not stopped; the place was given as a place to care for such needs. People of means should be approached to help, as they have benefited from the service these veterans gave our great country. Shame on VA for allowing this egregiousness and antipathy toward them.

– Larry Cearlock, Harristown, Ill.

Whoever is responsible for utilizing the West Los Angeles VA campus in a manner opposite to what it was originally donated for should be put in prison. The same goes for whoever has been continuing the practice. I am disgusted with VA, Los Angeles and the state of California for this fiasco. I hope there is a congressional investigation into this debacle and heads roll.

– Denis Kellogg, Alamo, Nev.

I don't know what to make of Ken Olsen's piece, but I do know that the portion about UCLA's "baseball stadium" tells me as much about what he left out as what he included.

Maybe the stadium shouldn't be there. Maybe the monthly lease should be more. But UCLA has produced thousands of officers through its Army, Air Force and Navy ROTC programs and deserves a more balanced story. Paying to play baseball on an empty field has absolutely no impact on using the buildings already in place for homeless veterans.

– Dan Gahagan, Woodbridge, Va.

This article was the most one-sided propaganda piece I have ever seen. It seems to push the notion that all homeless people in West Los Angeles are innocent victims of mental illness and need to be given permanent homes by the government – that the cities of Los Angeles and Beverly Hills, and West Los Angeles and Los Angeles County, are not helping the homeless. There are many organizations that help the poor and downtrodden, but these people cannot be using drugs or alcohol if they want to be assisted. They must have the desire to change their lives.

VA is there to provide medical care for veterans and not the homeless, even if they are veterans (which many are not). VA already generously compensates those who suffer from PTSD or other combat injuries. It has facilities and doctors to help those suffering from mental illness. Often, when VA checks out people who say they are veterans, it turns out they are phonies who were never in the service.

– Patrick Clark, Carmel, Calif.

'Keystone and Its Discontents'

Regarding the Keystone project (September), I do not believe there would be so much objection if the oil was to remain in this country to address our domestic needs and thus reduce reliance on outside sources. If the only purpose is to transport it for export, find another way to move it offshore.

– Frank Henderson, West Des Moines, Iowa

This article is aimed at the uninformed consumer. Keystone XL will benefit its Canadian owners. The job impact for the United States will be minimal and temporary, and there is no specific advantage for veterans. U.S. refining is pushing capacity because the industry won't pay to upgrade and build new facilities, so whether or not Keystone oil gets to our refineries will have no impact.

– Craig Doherty, Palatine, Ill.

Paul Glader vastly overstates the number of jobs the pipeline would create, unless we count those needed to clean up the almost-certain spills. The Pegasus pipeline in Mayflower, Ark., took only 45 minutes to spill 84,000 gallons of sticky, toxic tar sands. The evacuations of 22 homes were necessary because carcinogenic solvents are needed to make the tar sands pumpable, but they also corrode the pipeline. Keystone will have 10 times the capacity of Pegasus and pass over water sources for millions of people. And nowhere is there a guarantee that we will get any of the oil.

– James R. Deho, Villa Hills, Ky.

'Three's a Crowd'

Continuing with Alan W. Dowd's thought (September), I would suggest that James Madison's Federalist Paper No. 10 warns the majority in many respects about the tyranny of the minority. We see this playing out in the current Congress, where the common good seems to take a back seat to special interests.

– Edward M. Mulvaney, Rock Falls, Ill.

I'm disillusioned by both the Republican and Democratic parties. It seems that each blames the other for the situation we're in. I've voted for third-party candidates in the past several elections, mostly libertarians. Some believe voting like this means throwing away votes, but I'm not so sure. Perhaps if a third party made a good enough showing, the major parties would take notice.

As the saying goes, "We'd like to vote for the best man, but he's never a candidate."

– Herbert Killam, Wilder, Idaho

If you don't want to be forced into a situation where voting means choosing between the lesser of two evils, make the changes needed to ensure you have more than two choices. We have the behavior we have from elected officials because of the system we use to elect them. If we want different behavior, we must change the system.

There are three specific changes voters should demand elected officials at the state level make to our election laws:

- Institute instant runoff voting in primary elections, thereby forcing political parties to determine majority winners instead of tolerating plurality winners. In general elections, disable use of the form of political blackmail known as the "spoiler scenario."
- Neutralize gerrymandering by doing away with congressional districts in favor of proportional representation. Consider altering the size of Congress with the "Wyoming Rule."
- Allocate electors to the Electoral College based on the proportional percentage of the popular vote within each state.

None of these changes require a constitutional convention, constitutional amendments, twisted interpretations or term limits – only electing state representatives who will vote for legislation enacting these changes. Otherwise we can continue the insanity of doing things the way we've always done them. The choice is ours.

– Larry R. Bradley, Omaha, Neb.

'Serve Those Who Served'

My son was hospitalized from Jan. 9 until his passing on March 29, 2014. The Fisher House Matt Grills writes about (August) was a godsend for my daughter-in-law and me. People came in and prepared food for the residents. I met a lot of friends there. We all became a big family and helped each other, no questions asked. God bless the family that started Fisher House.

– Sandra Hightower, Splendora, Texas

Editor's note: The photo on the September cover was taken by The Associated Press.

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At an American Legion Veterans Crisis Command Center event in North Carolina last summer, a homeless veteran of the global war on terrorism discovered she was eligible for VA disability pay. She came to the command center hungry, worried and desperate for help. Her case was heard and adjudicated on the spot. The next day, $11,000 in retroactive compensation was deposited in her bank account. With the money, she and her son could move out of their car. Her first mission, however, was to get the boy a healthy meal.

She was one of more than 3,000 U.S. veterans who came to American Legion command centers throughout the country in the aftermath of VA's widely publicized meltdown last spring. The centers were the Legion's urgent response to fast-spreading revelations of long-delayed VA medical appointments, secret lists filled with the names of veterans who had no appointments at all, and allegations of falsified reports from managers who were paid bonuses based on those reports. A retired doctor stepped forward and told CNN in April that as many as 40 veterans had died waiting for unscheduled VA appointments in Phoenix. Dozens of other whistleblowers across the country soon followed, reporting similar practices, which led to the VA secretary's resignation, congressional hearings, and federal legislation to increase staff and triage VA patients at non-VA facilities, all followed by reports, audits and debates about what happened and who could be blamed.

From the beginning of this debacle, The American Legion has been steadfast in its position, a position that has been validated over and over after months of face-to-face advocacy for veterans and families at our command centers, in the company of local VA staff and officials. The summary is this: the problem was not, and is not, isolated to Phoenix; ridiculously long waiting times for VA appointments have unnecessarily jeopardized the lives of veterans throughout the system for too long; anyone who falsified records that endangered veterans must be terminated from VA employment and, if warranted, criminally prosecuted; and the backlog of undecided VA benefits claims contributes mightily to the dilemma because care delayed is care denied.

The Legion is dedicated to solving the problem and helping restore trust, two goals we believe can be attained.

That is why we will continue to conduct town hall meetings and veterans outreach centers where face-to-face advocacy can produce real results for veterans and their families, like the mother we helped in North Carolina and thousands of others we assisted last summer and fall. We fully expect VA to be there with us as we work together to turn this year's crisis into next year's success story.

Hundreds of thousands of U.S. military men and women will separate from service in the coming years, joining millions more veterans. They are not numbers. They are human beings who took the oath to defend with their lives the freedoms we enjoy. No matter where The American Legion needs to go, no matter how many individuals we need to help face to face, our commitment to a lasting solution will never waver.

National Commander Michael D. Helm

MEMORANDA

VETERANS DAY

What is your American Legion post doing for Veterans Day? The national website – **www.legion.org** – welcomes submissions through its Legiontown portal. Write your story, post a photo and share it with your Facebook friends.

www.legion.org/legiontown

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A fast-growing number of American Legion members have taken advantage of a new and improved Paid Up for Life program. No more renewal notices, wondering if you renewed or worrying about dues increases. A permanent plastic membership card and a lifetime subscription to *The American Legion Magazine* are among the benefits of being paid up for life. Learn about a special offer for new PUFL members at **www.legion.org/pufl**, or call toll-free at **(800) 433-3318**.

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— J. Fitzgerald, VA

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"You can make time in your life to do anything that you want to do."

KRISTA METTE

Krista Mette is not just the first female commander of Post 924 in Teutopolis, Ill. The 29-year-old is also a new mother.

Though Mette is busy at work and home, she places a high importance on serving veterans.

"With The American Legion, even though there is a huge age gap and we are all different, we all have something in common: we want to help each other, and we will help each other when we are in need," says Mette, an Army veteran of the Iraq war. "I joined the Legion because I like helping others and I like to volunteer in our community."

As post commander, Mette has been planning events, raising donations for programs and interacting with the media to promote the Legion all while working full time as a paralegal and raising her 8-month-old son, Oliver.

"By joining The American Legion, you're not just improving someone else's life," Mette says. "You're improving your own life because you are learning new skills, new trades, and you have a common goal to help veterans.

"When I was pregnant, I think some of them (post members) thought I was done. But life goes on. The benefit that you receive personally and the impact you can make on someone else's life is more important than missing that hour a week that you sit and watch television."

Mette and her husband, Aaron – also a member of Post 924 – signed Oliver up as a Sons of the American Legion member upon his birth.

"He'll (Oliver) have the opportunity to come to meetings, be a part of the Legion Family and see others being active, volunteering and helping out a good cause," Mette says. "It's important to us that he's an SAL member because he will know how to thank veterans for their service and dedication to our country."

BRANCH OF SERVICE
Army (2004-2008)

RANK AT DISCHARGE
Sergeant

MOS 27D paralegal

AMERICAN LEGION POST
Post 924, Teutopolis, Ill.

YEARS IN THE LEGION 7

VETERANS ACTIVITIES
- Post commander (2013-present)
- Senior vice commander (2012-2013)
- Junior vice commander (2011-2012)
- 23rd District Youth Activities Committee (2013)

Photo by Lucas Carter

Watch an interview with Krista Mette online:
www.legion.org/magazine

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01-19310-001-E94901

Overturn contraception ruling

SUPPORT

Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y.

■ Nadler is a member of the House Judiciary Committee.

OPPOSE

Sen. Deb Fischer, R-Neb.

■ Fischer is a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

In June, the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that businesses may, on religious grounds, deny contraception coverage to female employees. I strongly disagree with this decision. Laws on religious freedom are meant to allow individuals to practice their religion, not force others to live by it.

I was one of the chief sponsors of the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), which we wrote to protect Americans' individual religious beliefs from being imposed upon. That bill was to be a shield to protect one's personal beliefs, not a sword to impose beliefs on someone else.

Employers' religious beliefs, no matter how sincere, should not excuse them from following the law or allow them to interfere in the reproductive choices of their employees. The Affordable Care Act requires that contraception be provided with all employer-sponsored health-care plans. No religious belief may supersede that law, just as religion did not excuse restaurants or hotels from following civil rights laws in the 1960s or an Amish employer from paying into the Social Security system in the 1980s.

I worked with my colleagues to introduce the "Not My Boss' Business" Act in response to the high court's misguided ruling. Our bill protects employees' rights to all federally mandated health services – including contraception – and ensures that for-profit employers cannot use RFRA to override their employees' rights.

Ninety-nine percent of all U.S. women use birth control at some point in their lives. Their interests cannot be ignored and must not be cast aside. Women must be able to make decisions about contraception, or any other health care, with their doctors, not their employers.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

The Supreme Court ruled that "closely held" for-profit companies can claim a religious exemption to avoid including all forms of contraception in employees' health plans. Critics say that women have a right to this coverage.

Since the Supreme Court ruled on the Hobby Lobby case, a flood of misinformation has spread distorting the true meaning of the decision.

A *Washington Post* fact-checker rebutted a series of misleading claims about the meaning of the decision, concluding, "Simply put, the court ruling does not outlaw contraceptives, does not allow bosses to prevent women from seeking birth control and does not take away a person's religious freedom."

In other words, under this ruling, no employer has the right to tell an employee that she cannot use birth control. And nothing in the decision takes away women's access to birth control.

The Hobby Lobby opinion actually reaffirms the constitutional protection to use contraceptives first articulated in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, unequivocally stating that "under our cases, women (and men) have a constitutional right to obtain contraceptives." Moreover, current privacy laws prevent employers from even asking if employees use birth control.

And women continue to have broad access to safe, affordable birth control. Even before the Affordable Care Act was passed, 28 states had laws or regulations on the books to provide contraceptive coverage. More than 85 percent of large businesses provide it for their employees.

For women without such coverage, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services administers five separate programs to ensure that women have affordable access to contraception, including Medicaid.

It's possible to both stand tall for the principle of religious freedom and support safe access to birth control. The two are not mutually exclusive.

CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

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The Honorable *(name)*, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 • Phone: (202) 225-3121

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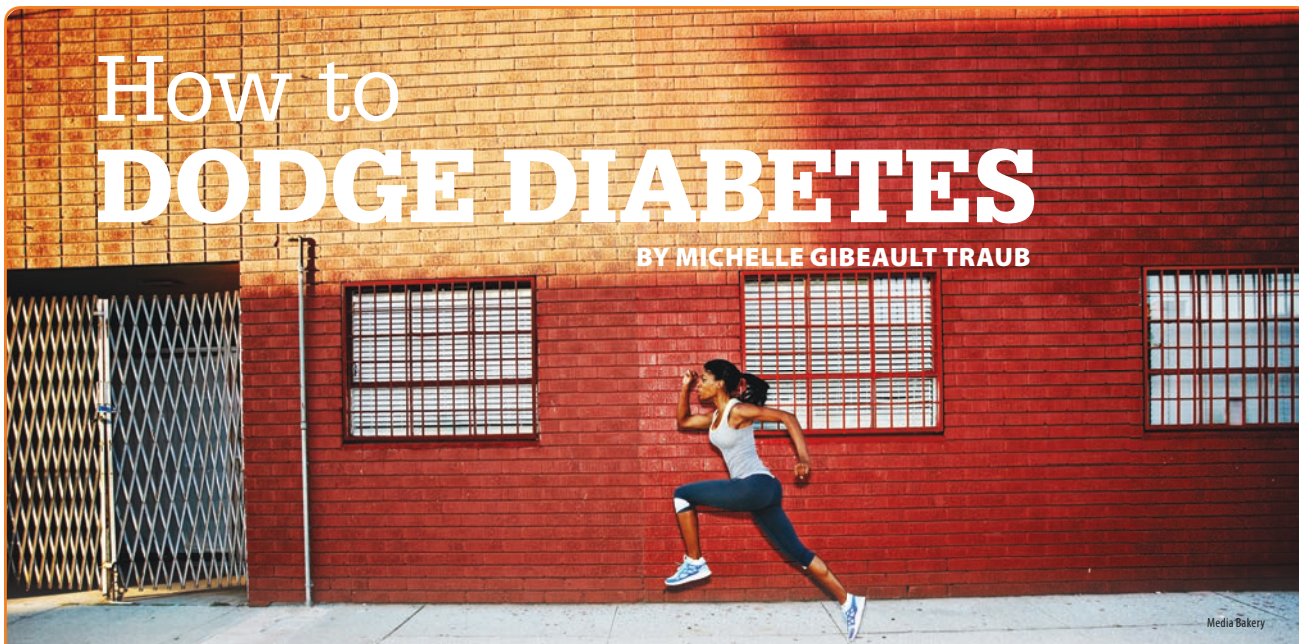
How to DODGE DIABETES

BY MICHELLE GIBEAULT TRAUB



Media Bakery

The nation's diabetes statistics are grim, with 29.1 million Americans living with the disease. And others' risk of developing diabetes increases with age, making the consequences of poor blood sugar control all too real for many. There is good news, however. Diabetes is not a product of aging alone. It can be prevented by adapting to life's changes and making healthy choices along the way.

Manage your weight Texas-based endocrinologist Kelly Wirfel says the most important aspect of diabetes prevention is "maintenance of near-normal weight with a healthy diet and regular exercise." Because we lose muscle as we age, our metabolism slows and we develop a greater tendency to store fat. In addition, major life changes often mean we participate in less daily activity. As such, we require fewer calories. If we don't adjust by eating less or burning more calories, we are destined to gain weight.

Cut calories There are several solutions for decreasing calorie intake: cutting portion sizes, forgoing calorie-rich desserts and snacks, and substituting water or tea for beverages such as soda or juice. Alternatively, you can fill up on lower-calorie foods like broth-based soups and fiber-rich vegetables, fruits and whole grains. Avoiding high-fat foods like butter, cream, cheese and fatty meats while limiting foods with added sugar will naturally lower the calories you consume.

Stay active If counting calories feels overwhelming, increasing your activity level through regular exercise may be enough to prevent weight gain. The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), a federally funded research study, concluded that a moderate diet – teamed with 30 minutes of exercise performed five times per week – led to a 5 to 7 percent weight loss. That was enough to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes in study participants. Exercise is especially important in diabetes prevention because it helps the body lower blood sugar efficiently. All forms of movement help, including walking, biking, gardening, swimming and taking an exercise class.

Eat unprocessed foods Several nutrients appear to be especially beneficial for diabetes prevention and blood-sugar regulation. An analysis of data from multiple research studies revealed that individuals who consumed the highest amounts of magnesium had a 23 percent lower risk of developing diabetes. When foods are processed for packaging, like with white flour and boxed mixes, magnesium is depleted. So to get ample magnesium it is important to eat fresh, unprocessed foods like green leafy vegetables, nuts, beans and whole grains. Like magnesium, the mineral chromium plays a role in maintaining healthy blood sugar levels. Chromium can be found in a variety of unprocessed foods, including broccoli, potatoes, meats and whole grains.

Aim for more D Vitamin D is a hormone produced naturally by the skin in response to the sun, as well as a nutrient consumed primarily through fortified dairy products. Vitamin D has

See **DIABETES** *on page* **16**

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FAT CHANCE

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"Trans fats" weren't on food labels until 2006, when the FDA mandated that consumers be told about their amount in the foods they were buying.

Trans fatty acids (or trans fats) are fats that have been altered in processing by adding hydrogen. The result is a fat that remains solid at higher temperatures and is used by manufacturers to improve the texture, shelf life and flavor stability of foods such as cookies, frozen pizza and pie crusts. The problem is that trans fats raise the level of LDL (low-density lipoprotein), which collects along arterial walls and leads to a greatly increased risk of coronary artery disease and heart attacks. They also lower the level of HDL (high-density lipoprotein), which actually works to lower the level of LDL.

Recently, the FDA moved to institute a permanent ban on trans fats by determining that partially hydrogenated oils (the main source of trans fats) are no longer recognized as GRAS ("generally recognized as safe," an FDA designation for all substances added to food for human consumption).

According to the CDC, this determination – not yet permanent, giving the food industry time to reformulate products so as not to cause a market disruption – could prevent 10,000 to 20,000 heart attacks and up to 7,000 coronary heart disease deaths every year.

But consumers should read labels and understand that a good diet isn't based on the presence or absence of a single ingredient, according to Sean O'Keefe, a Virginia Tech food sciences professor.

"That's not the way diet and nutrition work," he says. "The reason that products with things like trans fats exist is because our standard excuse today is 'I don't have time.' So we trade off between convenience and what goes into a healthy diet."

Look instead for the so-called good fats: polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats, found in oils such as olive and sunflower, and other heart-healthy oils like those in nuts, seeds and fish.

– Lance Frazer

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

Media Bakery

DIABETES
continued from page **14**

been associated with a decreased risk of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes. In a review of data from the Nurses' Health Study, daily intakes of more than 800 IU (international units) vitamin D and more than 1,200 mg calcium were associated with a 33 percent lower risk of type 2 diabetes. As we age, the body's ability to make vitamin D from UV rays decreases, so it is important to get additional vitamin D from your diet or ask your doctor about supplements.

Get tested The CDC reports that 27.8 percent of Americans with diabetes are undiagnosed, and recommends anyone 45 or older be tested. If you have additional risk factors such as obesity, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol or a family history of diabetes, it is especially important that you consult with a health-care provider. Through a simple blood or urine test, your provider will be able to evaluate your blood sugar levels.

Michelle Gibeault Traub is a dietitian and health writer based in Connecticut.

Cold-weather workouts

As winter approaches, HealthDay has some tips for outdoor exercise:

- **Check the air temperature and wind chill before heading out.**
- **Dress in layers to adjust the amount of insulation you need during your workout.**
- **Cover your head.**
- **Wear gloves to keep blood flowing to your hands and prevent cold-related tissue damage.**

Media Bakery

Best anti-inflammatories

According to *Pharmacy Times* and *U.S. News & World Report*, the following products are pharmacists' top picks for anti-inflammatories:

PRODUCT	PERCENT OF PHARMACISTS WHO RECOMMEND
Advil	37
Aleve	31
Motrin	26

Sometimes hepatitis C (Hep C) can feel forgotten. After all, it's slow moving, with symptoms that may not appear for years. No wonder why you push it to the back of your mind and forget it. But there's something that shouldn't be forgotten. Hep C is a serious disease that affects over three million people. And left untreated, it can lead to liver damage and potentially even liver cancer.

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Discharges to be reviewed in PTSD cases

BY TOM PHILPOTT

Tens of thousands of veterans discharged under other-than-honorable (OTH) conditions who were later diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, or can present evidence they suffered from war-related stress, have fresh chances to seek upgrades to their discharges and gain eligibility for veterans benefits, including disability pay.

On Sept. 3, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel issued "supplemental guidance" for the Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records to "fully and carefully consider every petition based on PTSD brought by each veteran" seeking an upgrade.

Hagel was encouraged to act by a class-action lawsuit brought on behalf of Vietnam War veterans, and by the personal advocacy of former Senate colleague Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn.

Getty Images

"Many veterans are going to get the break they have deserved for several decades," American Legion National Commander Mike Helm said of the Hagel memo. He noted that the Legion is the "only veterans service organization that automatically helps veterans with discharge petitions," handling 211 of them in 2013.

Many veterans, particularly during the Vietnam War, received OTH discharges for behavior possibly connected to undiagnosed and untreated PTSD. The medical community at that time didn't recognize the condition and only created a PTSD diagnostic code in 1980.

Based on a policy change made years ago, the armed forces cannot separate a servicemember with a "bad paper" discharge until first determining if the member suffers from PTSD or traumatic brain injury.

The idea is that a member with behavioral issues might be more deserving of mental health treatments and a service-connected disability rating than a punitive discharge. Veterans with any type of bad paper discharge, including OTH, are ineligible for VA benefits, including disability compensation, the GI Bill and even military burials.

In March, the Veterans Legal Services Clinic at Yale University Law School filed a federal class-action lawsuit on behalf of five Vietnam combat veterans and three veterans organizations, including Vietnam Veterans of America. It seeks relief for tens of thousands of veterans who developed PTSD in service and received OTH discharges.

The complaint says that as a result of undiagnosed PTSD, these veterans were unable to perform assigned military duties and were discharged for misconduct attributable to their post-traumatic stress. Yet over the years the military "has near-categorically refused to correct these wrongful discharges," the lawsuit contends.

Resulting hardships have included "homelessness, prolonged unemployment and severely damaged family and social relationships. Isolated and impoverished, they have struggled to cope not only with their war wounds but also with the shame of other-than-honorable discharges."

A DoD spokesman could give no estimate on the number of veterans who might see discharges upgraded. But Emma Kaufman, a Yale law student and member of the Veterans Legal Services Clinic, estimates that up to 80,000 Vietnam veterans could be eligible. She noted that the 1990 National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study estimated that 30 percent of Vietnam theater veterans had PTSD at some time in their lives and that 260,000 Vietnam veterans received "bad paper" discharges.

"Bad paper" includes bad conduct and dishonorable discharges. However, only veterans with OTH discharges, sometimes termed "undesirable" discharges, will qualify for reconsideration.

Kaufman said the lawsuit, *Monk v. Mabus*, remains active as plaintiffs await details on how the services will implement Hagel's guidance and reach out to affected veterans. Those who think they may be helped by Hagel's memo can contact the clinic at **(203) 436-9270** for advice.

Tom Philpott has been covering military personnel and veterans issues for more than 30 years.

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As voted by American Legion media audience members

One of our nation's founding fathers, Patrick Henry, put it this way: "The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave."

These are the signature characteristics of American veterans. Their strength, vigilance and courage occupy a revered place in the collective conscience of a public made free by the willingness of some to protect all others.

Veterans Day is a time to honor them, living and dead, from the patriots who fought for independence in the late 18th century to the men and women who saved the lives of their fallen comrades on the battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq. Some came home to become movie stars, professional athletes, generals and presidents. Others, like the four chaplains of different faiths who went down with a sinking troop ship after passing out life jackets to everyone else they could, would not live to see their legacies honored.

Last May, *The American Legion Magazine* asked its readers, website visitors and social media followers to select from a list of 100 beloved U.S. veterans. More than 70,000 votes were cast. The choices span our nation's lifetime.

Here are the top 25, with descriptions written by authors, experts, historians and, in a few cases, those who knew them best. An extended version of America's Most Beloved Veterans can be found online at **www.legion.org/belovedveterans**.

AUDIE MURPHY 1

He was an unlikely hero. Born into a life of crushing poverty in Texas, Audie Murphy was so scrawny when he tried to enlist after Pearl Harbor that the Marine Corps and the paratroopers wouldn't take him. He joined the infantry. Even there, his officers suggested a non-combat role. Instead, Murphy became a front-line warrior and one of history's most decorated combat veterans. But he wasn't fearless. On the battlefield, "fear is right there beside you," he wrote.

Murphy was an everyman who found and lost himself in war. His Medal of Honor citation praised his "indomitable courage," but he paid a heavy price for his heroism. Even after he became a movie star, Murphy fought demons war had created within him.

"Before the war, I'd get excited and enthused about a lot of things," he told John Huston, who directed him in "The Red Badge of Courage," "but not anymore." He suffered from nightmares, slept with a gun under his pillow and gambled recklessly. He titled his autobiography "To Hell and Back," but it seems a part of Murphy never returned from the hell of combat. Such are the sacrifices heroes make.

– Tom Huntington, contributing editor to America in WWII *magazine and author of "Searching for George Gordon Meade: The Forgotten Victor of Gettysburg"*

Corbis

2 GEORGE WASHINGTON

Wikimedia Commons

In June 1775, when George Washington accepted the daunting assignment of commanding Congress' forces in the fight for American independence from Britain, he was already a seasoned veteran. During the 1750s, while in his 20s, as colonel of the Virginia Regiment, he'd learned hard lessons in leadership fighting the French and their Indian allies in savage frontier skirmishes.

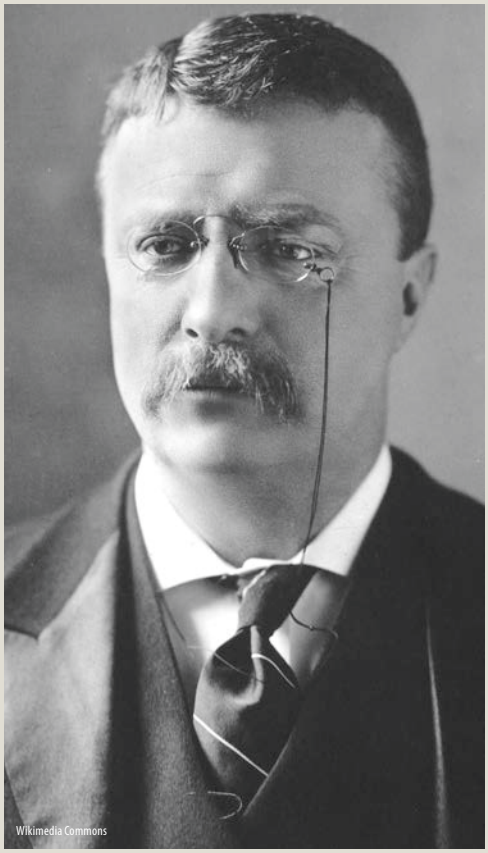
That experience was crucial during the Revolutionary War, when Washington faced the far greater challenge of maintaining the armed struggle against the British Empire with an army that was typically understrength, underfunded, and all too often unappreciated by the politicians and civilians for whom it fought.

For eight long years of punishing campaigning, Washington inspired the officers and men of the Continental Army through his personal example of courage, determination and integrity, always sharing their hardships and dangers.

The worst situations brought out the best in Washington's character. Most famously, despite a discouraging series of defeats around New York in 1776, before that year was over he re-crossed the Delaware River in a devastating counterattack, scoring victories at Trenton and soon after at Princeton that revived the patriot cause.

As first president, George Washington remains celebrated as the father of his country. By forging the Continental Army into a tough, well-trained force of professionals, he deserves equal recognition as the true father of the U.S. Army.

– Stephen Brumwell, author of "George Washington: Gentleman Warrior"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3 THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Theodore Roosevelt's ranking in the top tier of beloved veterans parallels his top-tier ranking (fourth or higher in polls of historians) among U.S. presidents. The great affection for Roosevelt as a veteran is a product of his heroic battlefield performance in Cuba in 1898 and his extremely successful efforts to bolster U.S. military power between 1897 and the end of his life in 1919, along with his exemplary character, endearing personality and other monumental accomplishments.

Soon after the Spanish-American War broke out in the spring of 1898, TR resigned from his position as assistant secretary of the Navy to organize and lead into combat the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry. On July 1, 1898, Roosevelt's "Rough Riders" joined other Army regiments in driving entrenched and well-armed Spanish forces from the San Juan Heights. He would never cease to remember that July day as his "crowded hour," as "the great day of my life."

As president, he built up the U.S. Navy, making it the world's second most powerful, and, to the great benefit of the nation and the world, institutionalized a naval building program for the long term. The 14-month world cruise of his Great White Fleet proved to be both a magnificent spectacle and a brilliant diplomatic maneuver, and has contributed further to his standing as a particularly beloved veteran.

– William N. Tilchin, history professor at Boston University, author of "Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire: A Study in Presidential Statecraft," and editor of the quarterly Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal

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4 ALVIN YORK

My grandfather, Alvin C. York, learned to shoot early in life and always had a rifle or pistol handy. He hunted and shot in matches on Saturdays with his father. That served him well when he faced an overwhelming enemy force in the Argonne Forrest on Oct. 8, 1918.

When the fight was over, York and seven others had captured 132 Germans. The other seven had been pinned down behind cover by machine-gun fire from the surrounding high ground and were unable to assist in the fight. At one point, a German officer and five men charged him with fixed bayonets. He had only a half of a clip left in his rifle, so he pulled his pistol and shot the last one first and worked his way up until the last one was shot, who was leading the charge.

For his actions, York was awarded the Medal of Honor, the French Croix de Guerre and numerous other medals. When he returned home he received many lucrative offers, but he turned them down because he felt he would be selling his uniform and service overseas. He returned to the mountains of Tennessee to marry his sweetheart, Miss Gracie, and raise his family on a farm in the Wolf River Valley of Pall Mall.

My grandfather treasured education, which he had not had the privilege of receiving as a child and young man. He built and ran a high school, York Agricultural Institute, and worked tirelessly for the children of Fentress County. On two occasions, he mortgaged his own home to make sure the school stayed open.

At the start of World War II, York volunteered for duty with the Army. Due to his age and physical ability he did not see active duty, but was commissioned a colonel in the Signal Corps (for which he wore no uniform or received pay) and traveled around the country selling war bonds. A stroke left him partially paralyzed until his death in 1964.

His life's work and legacy live on through the York Historic State Park, York Agricultural Institute and the Sgt. York Patriotic Foundation.

– Gerald E. York, retired Army colonel

5 GEORGE PATTON

Library of Congress

Nearly 70 years after Gen. George S. Patton's death, he remains one of America's most popular military figures. Why? The answer is simple: Patton was a winner who knew how to convince his soldiers that they were winners too.

The Germans tested Patton's leadership early in his World War II command. He had taken over the U.S. Army's II Corps after its disastrous performance at the Battle of the Kasserine Pass in February 1943. He was in charge less than a month when the Deutsches Afrika Korps challenged his command at El Guettar. Patton's soldiers whipped the panzers, and it was the U.S. Army's first major victory against the German Army in Europe.

Patton's success continued. During the summer of 1943, leading the Seventh Army during the invasion of Sicily, his soldiers captured or killed more than 13,000 enemy soldiers while sustaining a fraction of those casualties in return. After Sicily, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed Patton to lead the Third Army in northwest Europe.

On Aug. 1, 1944, Patton's Third Army rocketed out of Normandy and raced across France in record time, crippling the German Army. In late September, his divisions crushed the German Fifth Panzer Army at the Battle of Arracourt. In December, while the rest of the Allied armies reeled from the Battle of the Bulge, the Third Army was counterattacking. Asked how long it would take his soldiers to relieve Bastogne, Patton promised that his men would be ready to move in less than 48 hours. Senior leaders scoffed, but he proved them wrong, and his men relieved the 101st Airborne the day after Christmas.

Everywhere Patton went, he won. The men who served under him loved him, while his enemies respected and feared him. After the war, many German generals claimed he was the best Allied general. They were right.

– Leo Barron, author of "Patton at the Battle of the Bulge: How the General's Tanks Turned the Tide at Bastogne"

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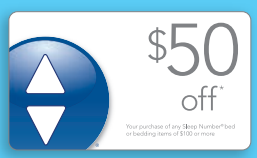

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6 DWIGHT EISENHOWER

Library of Congress

"If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt it is mine alone." So wrote Dwight David Eisenhower, supreme commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force landing in Normandy on June 6, 1944. On the eve of the greatest military endeavor in history, Eisenhower understood the deep responsibility of command. The decision to commit 150,000 men, 5,000 ships and countless aircraft to the liberation of Western Europe from Nazi oppression was his. In the face of a determined enemy and horrific weather, he told his assembled lieutenants, "OK, we'll go!"

From humble beginnings in America's heartland, Eisenhower rose to the highest echelon of military command, proved himself the master of coalition warfare during World War II, and engendering the confidence of the American people in his ability to lead them through the earliest days of the Cold War, was twice elected president. He never shrank from a challenge but discharged his duty with an earnest will and an unforgettably broad grin. It was easy to like Ike.

Dwight Eisenhower placed the success of the mission ahead of any personal reward or gain. In doing so, he defined leadership by example.

– Michael Haskew, author of "West Point 1915: Eisenhower, Bradley, and the Class the Stars Fell On"

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7 NORMAN SCHWARZKOPF

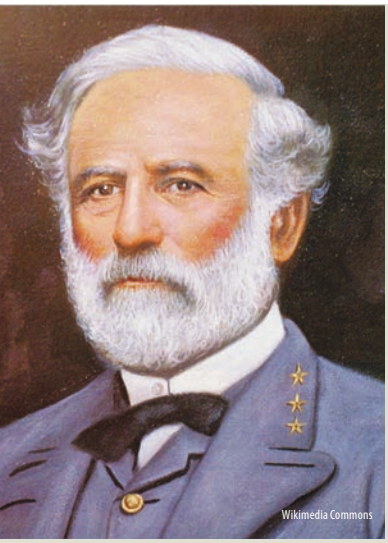
The reality is that when anyone thinks of Desert Storm, they think of Stormin' Norman, the Bear, the Commander – the tough, brusque guy with a heart of care and kindness, who was the personification of the troops he loved and led to victory.

With contributions from three dozen countries, he created and led a force of almost 700,000 troops to drive the Iraqis out of Kuwait. It's hard to believe now that there were even Egyptian and Syrian forces under Norm's command. The international community was united.

Schwarzkopf gained the confidence of the coalition leaders, and they were full partners and allies in the campaign. Of vital importance, he also gained the full confidence of the American people, who saw young men and women who were trained, competent and disciplined, washing away any lingering Vietnam-era images.

He was a larger-than-life figure who by his performance, his articulateness and his brilliant strategy lit up the world.

– Colin Powell, retired four-star Army general and former U.S. secretary of state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8 ROBERT E. LEE

Robert E. Lee began his military career in 1829, finishing second in his class at West Point without a single demerit. He served with distinction in the Mexican War, and after three years as superintendent of West Point deployed with the U.S. Cavalry to the western plains.

During the Civil War, Lee organized his Army of Northern Virginia from a mixed tapestry of troops into one of the most formidable and effective fighting forces ever known. He did this in spite of a severe disparity of numbers and chronic shortages of food, clothing and medical supplies. Always considerate of his men, he surrendered at Appomattox rather than expose them to more bloodshed when he faced the inevitable.

Lee considered that his most important work was done during reconstruction as he sought to instill among Southerners a lack of bitterness and a sense of union with the reunited country. He worked diligently as president of Washington College to prepare young men of the South for a productive future while instilling in them his own gentlemanly and Christian attributes.

It is quite easy for veterans to admire him and try to emulate such a soldier and citizen.

– Donald Hopkins, Mississippi surgeon, Vietnam War veteran, and author of "Robert E. Lee in War and Peace: The Photographic History of a Confederate and American Icon"

9 JIMMY DOOLITTLE

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"His deeds are in sharp contrast to his name," the *Miami Daily News* once wrote of aviation pioneer and Medal of Honor recipient Jimmy Doolittle (1896-1993). Though born in California, he spent his formative years in Alaska, where his father unsuccessfully hunted gold. The 5-foot-4-inch Doolittle learned early on to compensate for his small size by raising his fists, boxing professionally through high school and college at the University of California School of Mines.

A gifted racing and stunt pilot with an ear-to-ear grin, the brilliant Doolittle earned his master's and doctorate degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was not only the first pilot to fly cross-country in a single day but the first to take off, pilot a plane and land solely on instruments, a feat he accomplished in a hooded cockpit. He later worked for Shell Oil and was instrumental in developing 100-octane fuel.

Doolittle is most known for his planning and execution of the famed April 18, 1942, bombing raid against Tokyo that bears his name. The audacious assault prompted Japan's military leaders to commit to the invasion of Midway, which ended in disaster and proved the pivotal turning point of the Pacific War. Doolittle went on to command the 12th, 15th and 8th Air Forces. He returned to Shell Oil at the war's end, where he served as a vice president and a director.

– James M. Scott, author of the forthcoming "Target Tokyo: Jimmy Doolittle and the Raid That Avenged Pearl Harbor"

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10 ULYSSES S. GRANT

Most Americans today could use a history lesson about the Northern general who won the Civil War. By the time of his death in 1885, Ulysses S. Grant had earned the gratitude of millions who believed he was both the general who saved the Union and the president who made sure that it stayed together.

Grant was born in modest circumstances, graduated from West Point in 1841 and enjoyed brief acclaim during the Mexican-American War. In 1861, he answered President Abraham Lincoln's call for volunteers and rapidly won fame in the Western Theater, scoring decisive and morale-raising victories at Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Vicksburg and Chattanooga.

When Lincoln tapped him in early 1864 to be the leading general, Grant directed victories that vindicated his strategic vision, guaranteeing his president's re-election. The Union's hero was praised for the magnanimous terms of surrender that he offered, and Gen. Robert E. Lee accepted, at Appomattox on April 9, 1865. Shortly afterward, he became the first four-star general in U.S. history, remaining as head of the Army until nominated for president by the Republican Party in 1868. Grant swept to victory with his famous campaign slogan, "Let us have peace," and was re-elected in 1872.

Later, stricken ill with cancer, Grant wrote his "Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant." With those volumes, Grant ensured his legacy as one of America's greatest generals and most essential presidents.

– Joan Waugh, author of "U.S. Grant: American Hero, American Myth"

For people with a higher risk of stroke due to
Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) not caused by a heart valve problem

ELIQUIS® (apixaban) is a prescription medicine used to reduce the risk of stroke and blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation, a type of irregular heartbeat, not caused by a heart valve problem.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

- **Do not stop taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation without talking to the doctor who prescribed it for you. Stopping ELIQUIS increases your risk of having a stroke.** ELIQUIS may need to be stopped, prior to surgery or a medical or dental procedure. Your doctor will tell you when you should stop taking ELIQUIS and when you may start taking it again. If you have to stop taking ELIQUIS, your doctor may prescribe another medicine to help prevent a blood clot from forming.
- **ELIQUIS can cause bleeding, which can be serious,** and rarely may lead to death.
- **You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take ELIQUIS and** take other medicines that increase your risk of bleeding, such as aspirin, NSAIDs, warfarin (COUMADIN®), heparin, SSRIs or SNRIs, and other blood thinners. **Tell your doctor about all medicines, vitamins and supplements you take.** While taking ELIQUIS, you may bruise more easily and it may take longer than usual for any bleeding to stop.
- Get medical help right away if you have any of these signs or symptoms of bleeding:
  - unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that lasts a long time, such as unusual bleeding from the gums; nosebleeds that happen often, or menstrual or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
  - bleeding that is severe or you cannot control
  - red, pink, or brown urine; red or black stools (looks like tar)
  - coughing up or vomiting blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds
  - unexpected pain, swelling, or joint pain; headaches, feeling dizzy or weak
- **ELIQUIS is not for patients with artificial heart valves.**
- **Spinal or epidural blood clots (hematoma).** People who take ELIQUIS, and have medicine injected into their spinal and epidural area, or have a spinal puncture have a risk of forming a blood clot that can cause long-term or permanent loss of the ability to move (paralysis).

I was taking warfarin. But ELIQUIS was a better find.

I TAKE ELIQUIS® (apixaban) FOR 3 GOOD REASONS:

1. ELIQUIS reduced the risk of stroke better than warfarin.
2. ELIQUIS had less major bleeding than warfarin.
3. Unlike warfarin, there's no routine blood testing.

ELIQUIS and other blood thinners increase the risk of bleeding which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death.

Ask your doctor if ELIQUIS is right for you.

This risk is higher if, an epidural catheter is placed in your back to give you certain medicine, you take NSAIDs or blood thinners, you have a history of difficult or repeated epidural or spinal punctures. Tell your doctor right away if you have tingling, numbness, or muscle weakness, especially in your legs and feet.

- **Before you take ELIQUIS,** tell your doctor if you have: kidney or liver problems, any other medical condition, or ever had bleeding problems. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or plan to become pregnant or breastfeed.

- **Do not take ELIQUIS if you** currently have certain types of abnormal bleeding or have had a serious allergic reaction to ELIQUIS. A reaction to ELIQUIS can cause hives, rash, itching, and possibly trouble breathing. Get medical help right away if you have sudden chest pain or chest tightness, have sudden swelling of your face or tongue, have trouble breathing, wheezing, or feeling dizzy or faint.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see additional Important Product Information on the adjacent page.

Individual results may vary.

Visit ELIQUIS.COM
or call 1-855-ELIQUIS

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(apixaban) tablets 5mg 2.5mg

IMPORTANT FACTS about ELIQUIS® (apixaban) tablets

℞ ONLY

The information below does not take the place of talking with your healthcare professional. Only your healthcare professional knows the specifics of your condition and how ELIQUIS may fit into your overall therapy. Talk to your healthcare professional if you have any questions about ELIQUIS (pronounced ELL eh kwiss).

What is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS (apixaban)?

For people taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation: Do not stop taking ELIQUIS without talking to the doctor who prescribed it for you. Stopping ELIQUIS increases your risk of having a stroke. ELIQUIS may need to be stopped, prior to surgery or a medical or dental procedure. Your doctor will tell you when you should stop taking ELIQUIS and when you may start taking it again. If you have to stop taking ELIQUIS, your doctor may prescribe another medicine to help prevent a blood clot from forming.

ELIQUIS can cause bleeding which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death. This is because ELIQUIS is a blood thinner medicine that reduces blood clotting.

You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take ELIQUIS and take other medicines that increase your risk of bleeding, such as aspirin, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (called NSAIDs), warfarin (COUMADIN®), heparin, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) or serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs), and other medicines to help prevent or treat blood clots.

Tell your doctor if you take any of these medicines. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one listed above.

While taking ELIQUIS:

- you may bruise more easily
- it may take longer than usual for any bleeding to stop

Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of these signs or symptoms of bleeding when taking ELIQUIS:

- unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that lasts a long time, such as:
  - unusual bleeding from the gums
  - nosebleeds that happen often
  - menstrual bleeding or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
- bleeding that is severe or you cannot control
- red, pink, or brown urine
- red or black stools (looks like tar)
- cough up blood or blood clots
- vomit blood or your vomit looks like coffee grounds
- unexpected pain, swelling, or joint pain
- headaches, feeling dizzy or weak

ELIQUIS (apixaban) is not for patients with artificial heart valves.

Spinal or epidural blood clots or bleeding (hematoma). People who take a blood thinner medicine (anticoagulant) like ELIQUIS, and have medicine injected into their spinal and epidural area, or have a spinal puncture have a risk of forming a blood clot that can cause long-term or permanent loss of the ability to move (paralysis). Your risk of developing a spinal or epidural blood clot is higher if:

- a thin tube called an epidural catheter is placed in your back to give you certain medicine
- you take NSAIDs or a medicine to prevent blood from clotting
- you have a history of difficult or repeated epidural or spinal punctures
- you have a history of problems with your spine or have had surgery on your spine

If you take ELIQUIS and receive spinal anesthesia or have a spinal puncture, your doctor should watch you closely for symptoms of spinal or epidural blood clots or bleeding. Tell your doctor right away if you have tingling, numbness, or muscle weakness, especially in your legs and feet.

What is ELIQUIS?

ELIQUIS is a prescription medicine used to:

- reduce the risk of stroke and blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation.
- reduce the risk of forming a blood clot in the legs and lungs of people who have just had hip or knee replacement surgery.

It is not known if ELIQUIS is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take ELIQUIS (apixaban)?

Do not take ELIQUIS if you:

- currently have certain types of abnormal bleeding
- have had a serious allergic reaction to ELIQUIS. Ask your doctor if you are not sure

What should I tell my doctor before taking ELIQUIS?

Before you take ELIQUIS, tell your doctor if you:

- have kidney or liver problems
- have any other medical condition
- have ever had bleeding problems
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if ELIQUIS will harm your unborn baby
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if ELIQUIS passes into your breast milk. You and your doctor should decide if you will take ELIQUIS or breastfeed. You should not do both

Tell all of your doctors and dentists that you are taking ELIQUIS. They should talk to the doctor who prescribed ELIQUIS for you, before you have **any** surgery, medical or dental procedure. **Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including** prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Some of your other medicines may affect the way ELIQUIS works. Certain medicines may increase your risk of bleeding or stroke when taken with ELIQUIS.

How should I take ELIQUIS?

Take ELIQUIS exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Take ELIQUIS twice every day with or without food, and do not change your dose or stop taking it unless your doctor tells you to. If you miss a dose of ELIQUIS, take it as soon as you remember, and do not take more than one dose at the same time. **Do not run out of ELIQUIS (apixaban). Refill your prescription before you run out.** When leaving the hospital following hip or knee replacement, be sure that you will have ELIQUIS available to avoid missing any doses. **If you are taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation, stopping ELIQUIS may increase your risk of having a stroke.**

What are the possible side effects of ELIQUIS?

- See **"What is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS?"**
- ELIQUIS can cause a skin rash or severe allergic reaction. Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following symptoms:
  - chest pain or tightness
  - swelling of your face or tongue
  - trouble breathing or wheezing
  - feeling dizzy or faint

Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all of the possible side effects of ELIQUIS. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about ELIQUIS. For more information, talk with your doctor or pharmacist, call 1-855-ELIQUIS (1-855-354-7847), or go to www.ELIQUIS.com.

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11 JIMMY STEWART

The patriotism of James "Jimmy" Maitland Stewart, one of America's most beloved actors, was grounded in his smalltown upbringing and family military service history, reaching back to the Civil War. Rejected as underweight by his draft board, he went on a crash-eating program to bulk up. On March 22, 1941, one month after winning his best actor Oscar for his role as a tabloid journalist in "The Philadelphia Story," Stewart was accepted into the U.S. Army Air Corps – the first major movie star to enter the military.

Stewart then found himself fighting stateside duty training pilots, narrating films and selling war bonds. In November 1943, Capt. Stewart achieved his combat theater goal, arriving in England as a B-24 Liberator pilot. In September 1945, he returned home as a colonel and a decorated hero, having received the Distinguished Flying Cross with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Croix de Guerre with Palm and other medals.

Stewart entered the Air Force Reserve and retired after 27 years of service with the rank of major general, the highest-ranking Hollywood actor to serve in uniform. The on-screen honest, straightforward and humble "everyman" persona audiences loved was the same off-screen. His postwar movie contracts contained a clause that prevented studios from capitalizing on his military and war records.

– Dwight Jon Zimmerman, president of the Military Writers Society of America, whose books include "Lincoln's Last Days" and "Uncommon Valor: The Medal of Honor and the Warriors Who Earned It in Afghanistan and Iraq"

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12 DORIE MILLER

Sometimes the war hero is a cook, third class – like Doris "Dorie" Miller, his ship's heavyweight boxing champ and Navy Cross recipient, who dashed to the bridge to save the life of his mortally wounded skipper, Capt. Mervyn S. Bennion, during the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor.

With no training for the task, Miller also manned a .50-caliber Browning anti-aircraft machine gun until it ran out of ammunition, perhaps even downing one of the attacking Japanese aircraft. "I think I got one of those Jap planes," he later said. "They were diving pretty close to us."

Close is right. All told, USS *West Virginia* was hit by five aircraft torpedoes and two armor-piercing bombs. More than 100 officers and men were killed in the attack.

Interrupted from his laundry rounds that fateful morning, the 22-year-old farmer's son from Waco, Texas, found his assigned battle station wrecked, went to the bridge and carried the badly wounded Bennion to a first aid station, then manned the machine gun, all the while under fire.

Often considered the first African-American hero of World War II, Doris Miller was one of the 646 Americans lost when a single torpedo from a Japanese submarine sank the U.S. escort carrier *Liscome Bay* near the Gilbert Islands in the Pacific on Nov. 24, 1943.

In 2010, Miller was the only enlisted man among four distinguished sailors from the 20th century honored by a panel of U.S. postage stamps.

– C. Brian Kelly, co-author of "Best Little Stories from World War II" and "Best Little Stories from World War I"

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13 MICHAEL MURPHY

I'm often asked why Michael's legacy of service and sacrifice stands out among so many. As his father, I like to think it has less to do with his actions on June 28, 2005 – when he exposed himself to enemy fire to send a call for help and fought to his death so that a member of his squad could escape, for which he posthumously received the first Medal of Honor for actions in Afghanistan – and more about how Michael represents the spirit, honor and courage of all our fallen heroes.

Michael was, first and foremost, a team player, part of a team of Navy SEALs. As much as he fought and died for his teammates, they fought and died for him. Therefore, I see Michael as that "everyman" in our armed forces, embodying service, spirit, honor, courage and willingness to sacrifice for friends, teammates and country.

This wasn't something instilled in Michael as a SEAL but was part of his character as he was growing up. As a 13-year-old playing Little League baseball, he once hit a game-winning home run in the last inning. As he came into home plate, his teammates were there to congratulate him, telling him that he'd won the game for the team. Michael told them that they won the game together, because if others hadn't gotten on base, he wouldn't have made it to bat. I was amazed at his maturity – amazed that he thought more of his team than himself at such a young age.

When Americans hear Michael's story or see the movie "Lone Survivor," they're hearing and seeing the story of every American hero – a story of their willingness to protect and save their teammates, even at the cost of their own lives. A dad couldn't be any prouder of such a legacy.

– Daniel J. Murphy, combat-wounded Vietnam War veteran who served with the 25th Infantry Division in Tay Ninh province, and father of Navy Lt. Michael P. Murphy

14 EDDIE RICKENBACKER

The son of poor German-speaking Swiss immigrants, Edward Vernon Rickenbacker overcame the specter of his father's violent death, a debilitating eye injury and accusations of being a German spy to become the American ace of aces in World War I and a Medal of Honor recipient. His extraordinary capabilities, unshakable patriotism and steadfast perseverance enabled the grade-school dropout to circumvent the college degree requirement for pilots, shoot down 26 German aircraft and take command of the 94th Aero Squadron, which under his leadership grew into America's most successful air unit.

He went on to start a premier car company, own the Indianapolis Speedway and found Eastern Airlines. During World War II, Rickenbacker's harrowing three-week ordeal aboard a life raft with only rainwater and the food they could catch in the central Pacific showed a weary nation by example that it had the fortitude to survive a war on two fronts.

Part daredevil, part tinkerer, cool risk manager, improviser and showman, Rickenbacker helped forge a new, and particularly American, brand of heroism that would serve as a model for following generations of explorers, adventurers and warriors, from Jimmy Doolittle and Charles Lindbergh to Chuck Yeager and John Glenn.

– John F. Ross, author of "Enduring Courage: Ace Pilot Eddie Rickenbacker and the Dawn of the Age of Speed"

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CHRIS KYLE 15

Chris Kyle was a lot of things to a lot of people: Navy SEAL, legendary U.S. military sniper, decorated veteran of the Iraq war, beloved husband and father.

Yet of everything that can be said about Chris, the word that stands out most is one he would never have used to describe himself: hero. Not in the sense of a man who rushed into a hail of bullets to rescue others (he did). Not in the sense that his wife and children understand (no one will ever know that depth of Chris).

Chris Kyle is a hero because in every interaction he had with a person, it was clear that he had an unwavering faith. And he truly cared for and valued everyone he ever met.

There was no pretense, no "personality," to Chris Kyle. There was only the person – genuine, faithful, real. He had a sense of security and self-assuredness that are only found in a deep faith in Jesus Christ.

And for that, we can all say, "Thank you, Chris Kyle."

– Ed Young, senior pastor of Fellowship Church in Grapevine, Texas, and author of "The Creative Leader"

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16 THE FOUR CHAPLAINS

On Feb. 3, 1943, four Army chaplains – Father John P. Washington, Rabbi Alexander D. Goode, and the Revs. George L. Fox and Clark V. Poling – gave up their life jackets on a sinking Army transport in the North Atlantic so that others might live. Of the 902 soldiers, Navy armed guard, ship's crew and civilian passengers on board the *Dorchester*, only 230 survived. They have told us of the chaplains' efforts to restore calm in a hopeless and chaotic situation, and how they were last seen at the ship's stern, arms linked in prayer.

The survivors' testimony and the chaplains' bravery are enshrined at the Chapel of Four Chaplains in the Philadelphia Navy Yard, where the Chapel Memorial Foundation honors acts of selfless service nationwide in memory of the Four Chaplains and crew of USAT *Dorchester*.

– Louis A. Cavaliere, retired Navy captain and chairman of the Chapel of Four Chaplains, and Christine Beady, the chapel's executive director

Photo Courtesy Pat Tillman Foundation

PAT TILLMAN 17

The day after 9/11, Arizona Cardinals safety Pat Tillman (left) told a reporter, "At times like this you stop and think about just how good we have it, what kind of system we live in, and the freedoms we are allowed. A lot of my family has gone and fought in wars, and I really haven't done a damn thing."

The next spring, Pat put his NFL career on hold to enlist in the Army with his brother, Kevin. Assigned to the 75th Ranger Regiment at Fort Lewis, Wash., they served in Iraq in 2003 and in Afghanistan in 2004.

On April 22, 2004, Pat's unit was ambushed while traveling through the rugged canyon terrain of eastern Afghanistan. His heroic efforts to provide cover for fellow soldiers as they escaped led to his death via friendly fire. A decade later, Pat's story of service before self has become synonymous with American sacrifice and patriotism.

– Marie Tillman, president and co-founder, Pat Tillman Foundation

THE BROTHERS FOREVER VIETNAM TRIBUTE PISTOL

Honoring the Unbreakable Bond between Vietnam Veterans

When duty called, they answered. Some were drafted, others enlisted. It didn't matter where they came from or how they got there, none of them could imagine what waited for them on the other side of the world. More than two million Americans served in the Vietnam War and the experience changed them forever.

Together, they fought against a relentless enemy in an unforgiving country. Some were wounded, some became prisoners of war, and others paid the ultimate price. In Vietnam, boys became men, men became warriors, and warriors became brothers. They built a bond of brotherhood that will never be broken.

Today when Vietnam Veterans gather at reunions, they share a bond that most of us will never know. Feelings. Stories. Secrets. Special moments. The true meaning of survival. And even though the war is part of history, they know what it's like to trust their life to the man beside them and be willing to lay theirs on the line for their brothers.

Proudly Remembering a Generation of Heroes

Today, we honor the members of this exclusive American brotherhood that stood together in service to America. America Remembers is proud to introduce the **Brothers Forever™ Vietnam Tribute Pistol**. Issued exclusively by America Remembers, this historic Tribute is a working Colt® Government Model® honoring the brotherhood of warriors among America's Armed Forces in Vietnam. Craftsmen commissioned specifically for this project by America Remembers decorate each pistol in sparkling 24-karat gold artwork on the elegant, nickel-embellished slide. Issued in a limited edition of 1,000 Tributes, this presentation firearm captures the loyalty, courage, and camaraderie of all the proud Americans who fought in Vietnam.

The Colt .45 – A Trusted Military Sidearm

In the battlegrounds of Vietnam, protecting each other was a serious responsibility that demanded reliable firearms, and in addition to their service rifles, many of the men relied on their sidearms for added protection. There was no better pistol for the job than the trusted Colt .45 military service pistol.

With the Colt .45, Vietnam Veterans share a connection with generations of American fighting men who came before them. With its flat slide and virtually indestructible design, the Colt .45 proved itself virtually unstoppable in Vietnam, even under the toughest battlefield conditions. The Colt .45 was born for combat. As tough as the swamps, jungles, and rice paddies were in Vietnam, this pistol proved itself even tougher. To this day, it occupies a position of respect unparalleled in the world of military firearms.

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Whether you are a veteran who answered the call to duty in Vietnam, or you wish to honor your father, husband, brother, friend, or other family member, the Brothers Forever Vietnam Tribute Pistol is sure to become a cherished addition to your collection. Order your Brothers Forever Vietnam Tribute today and secure one of these fitting Tributes to those who heroically served our nation in Vietnam.

Few generations have faced a more daunting challenge than those who fought in Southeast Asia. When the nation called, they answered. They didn't hesitate to put their lives on the line and give everything in defense of freedom. As a nation, we owe them a tremendous amount of appreciation.

■ *The Tribute features a set of stunning faux ivory grips decorated with a logo honoring the service of Vietnam Veterans. The grip features a trio of warrior silhouettes over an outline of Vietnam, encircled by the slogan, "Vietnam War: Ours Was a Noble Cause." All three figures represent the unbreakable bond between men in uniform.*

■ *The left side of the slide features banners reading, "None Could Have Done It Better," and "Brothers Forever," set among familiar scenes of warriors serving in Vietnam against a forest of bamboo. Bamboo is common in Vietnam and was included as a symbol of Vietnam on the Vietnam Service Medal which was awarded to those who served.*

■ *The center image features a group of warriors standing together. The man on the far left is carrying a portable radio and the soldier in the center carries a M60 machine gun slung over his shoulder. It didn't matter the assignment, from patrols through the remote jungle, or a tight-knit company defending a small firebase, you can sense the deep personal connection between the men. The image to the right features a fellow soldier attending an injured warrior. In tough situations, friendship, loyalty, and words of encouragement could keep hope alive.*

■ *The right side features two soldiers aiding a wounded comrade while another covers their backs with his M-16. The image captures the strength of a unit working as one. In the heat of battle men depend on each other. It's a special trust that only veterans can fully understand. Also featured are banners honoring those who served in Vietnam. When the nation called, they answered.*

■ *Each side features banners that read, "Lest We Forget," along with powerful icons familiar to any Vietnam Veteran. One features a set of dog tags, the gleaming metal identification tags of those who serve in America's military, and a pair of empty combat boots.*

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18 DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

Celebrated for his record at West Point and one of the most decorated commanders of World War I, Gen. Douglas MacArthur is remembered for his July 1932 decision to wield federal troops against peaceful Bonus March demonstrators. The subsequent pictures of MacArthur's troops beating hapless veterans forever stained his reputation. As did his April 1951 defiance of President Harry Truman, which led to his dismissal – and his reputation as an officer who defied civilian control.

But MacArthur was also a great military commander with a record of accomplishment nearly unequaled by any other World War II leader. His defense of the Philippines, conquest of New Guinea, reduction of the Japanese fortress at Rabaul, and victories at Leyte and Luzon propelled him into the front ranks of America's greatest wartime strategists. His subsequent administration of postwar Japan sealed his, and America's, legacy as conquerers without animus. And despite his disagreements with Truman, his landings at Inchon during the Korean War are credited with reversing a near defeat.

Vain and self-promoting, MacArthur's final act revealed his understanding of war and of the American people. "Never get involved in a land war in Asia," he told John F. Kennedy in July 1961. Kennedy admired his advice and vowed to follow it, though sadly his successor didn't. Love him or hate him, Douglas MacArthur left his mark as a soldier, commander and veteran who refuses to fade away.

– Mark Perry, author of "The Most Dangerous Man In America: The Making of Douglas MacArthur"

19 JOHN F. KENNEDY

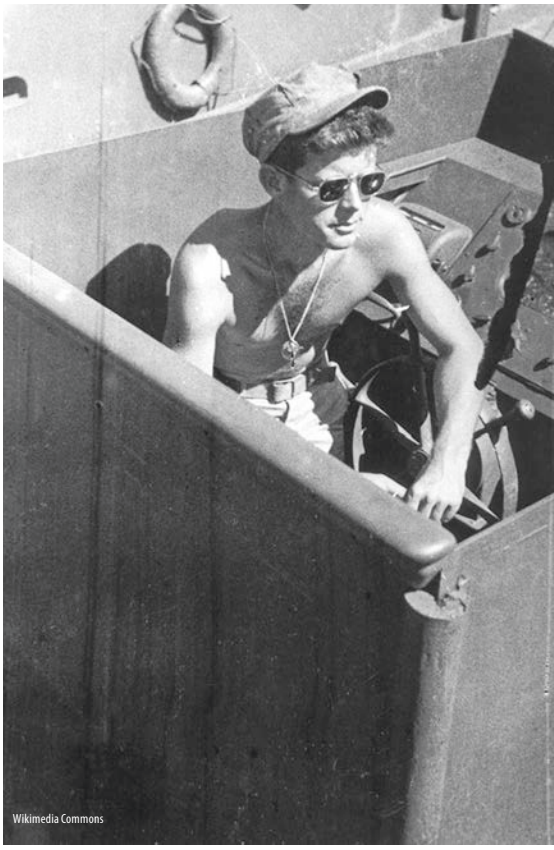
There is little question that the defining experience of John F. Kennedy's pre-presidential life was the sinking of PT-109. The son of one of the nation's wealthiest and most powerful men, he was tested in a way that few are, on Aug. 2, 1943, when a Japanese destroyer cut his boat in half.

JFK and his men clung to the listing hull for nine hours before swimming for the 70-yard-wide Plum Pudding Island. Despite his injured back, Kennedy stayed on course while towing a badly burned crewman by clenching the ties of his life jacket between his teeth. After establishing contact with two native islanders who were working as scouts for the Allies, Kennedy persuaded them to deliver a coconut he had etched with an SOS message to the nearest base. Rescue followed two days later. On June 12, 1944, Kennedy received the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for heroism. When asked how he had become a hero, JFK quipped, "It was involuntary. They sank my boat."

Elected president in 1960, Kennedy proved a friend of fellow veterans and a fierce advocate of preparedness. He established the Navy SEALs in 1962, authorized the "Green Beret" as the official headgear for Army Special Forces, and dramatically increased the defense budget, the number of Navy ships and Army divisions, and the nation's stockpile of nuclear weapons.

It was Kennedy's military service, and his tragic death, that gave full meaning to his famous inaugural declaration: "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country."

– Larry J. Sabato, author of "The Kennedy Half-Century: The Presidency, Assassination, and Lasting Legacy of John F. Kennedy"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20 BILLY MITCHELL

Billy Mitchell is one of the most iconic and controversial figures in U.S. military history. His achievements have been overshadowed by his political antics and flamboyant personality, the legends surrounding the origins of the Air Force and the politics of strategic bombing.

While Mitchell posthumously received a special medal for his outstanding pioneer service and foresight in the field of military aviation, his court-martial for insubordination – after accusing Army and Navy leaders of "almost treasonable administration of the national defense" – is one of the most extraordinary in the annals of U.S. military justice.

Lionized by the Air Force and demonized by the Navy, Mitchell has been described as a "heroic lone patriot fighting" against bureaucracy for the good of the country, on the one hand, and an "egotistical charlatan" more interested in grandstanding than the future of airpower, on the other.

Mitchell is often portrayed as the founder of the Air Force and the creator of strategic bombing. He was neither. Ironically, his World War I service is often overlooked and underplayed. In September 1918, he planned and led nearly 1,500 American and Allied aircraft at St. Mihiel in one of history's first coordinated air-ground offensives, and by the end of the war was commanding all U.S. Army air combat units in France. Indeed, it is difficult to see how the Air Service's success and acclaim would have been possible without Mitchell.

– Thomas Wildenberg, author of "Billy Mitchell's War with the Navy: The Interwar Rivalry Over Air Power"

21 JOHN PAUL JONES

In the Revolutionary War, the fledgling, tiny Continental Navy was no match for Great Britain's Royal Navy, which ruled the seas with a hundred massive ships of the line. The American rebels had a few frigates and sloops. For most of the war, the Continental Navy remained blockaded in port.

Not John Paul Jones. He understood that the battle must be carried into the enemy's home waters. First aboard the sloop *Providence*, he raided British fishing grounds in Nova Scotia, then took his newly built *Ranger* into British waters. His men defeated HMS *Drake* in a rousing single-ship action and made off with dozens of warships in hot pursuit. No naval force had attacked British soil in over a century.

Jones' moment of glory came a year later, on Sept. 23, 1779, when he took the frigate *Bonhomme Richard* into battle against a superior British warship, HMS *Serapis*. "I wish to have no connection with any ship that does not sail fast, for I intend to go in harm's way," Jones famously wrote, but it is an irony of history that he sailed into his most critical battle in an old, slow tub.

When the British captain asked him if was ready to surrender, Jones is said to have replied, "I have not yet begun to fight!" About two hours later, after losing half his men in intense fighting, the British captain struck his colors.

Embarrassed, the British tried to make the most of the defeat by granting the captain a knighthood for putting up a brave fight against the "pirate Jones." When he heard that Captain Pearson was now "Sir Richard," Jones slyly remarked, "Were I only able to make him a Lord someday."

Called the "father of the American Navy," Jones lies in a tomb at the U.S. Naval Academy. He gave the navy its age-old spirit: indomitable and bold.

– Evan Thomas, author of "John Paul Jones: Sailor, Hero, Father of the American Navy"

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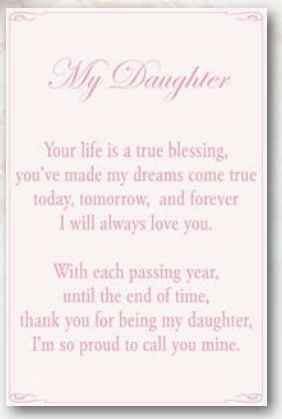

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22 THOMAS "STONEWALL" JACKSON

If you want to see why Stonewall Jackson endures as a figure of history and legend, take a look at the poem "Barbara Fritchie," written by the prominent American poet John Greenleaf Whittier in 1864, which became a national sensation two years after Jackson's death. In it, Whittier tells how Jackson ordered his men to shoot down an American flag in Frederick, Md. But when an old woman took the flag in her hands, Jackson ordered his men to stand down: "Who touches a hair of yon gray head / Dies like a dog! March on! he said."

None of this ever happened, but to the Northern nation – to the wartime nation – the incident was as good as documented fact. What it said was that Jackson was a gentleman and a Christian and a decent person, certainly, in spite of his role in killing and maiming tens of thousands of young Northern men. But it also said that he was, fundamentally, an American. He had, after all, fought heroically for his country in the Mexican War. In Whittier's poem, it was his Americanness that had stirred in him and redeemed him.

What happened after Jackson's death was the first great national outpouring of grief for a fallen leader in the country's history. Though it was overshadowed by Lincoln's death two years later, Jackson's death touched the hearts of every household in the South, and prompted many admiring testimonials in the North. "I rejoice at Stonewall Jackson's death as a gain to our cause," wrote Union Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren, "and yet in my soldier's heart I cannot but see him as the best soldier in all of this war, and grieve at his untimely end."

– S.C. Gwynne, author of "Rebel Yell: The Violence, Passion, and Redemption of Stonewall Jackson"

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23 BRUCE CRANDALL

Col. Bruce "Ol' Snake" Crandall is the bravest, craziest, funniest helicopter pilot I ever met in 43 years of going to war.

On Nov. 14, 1965, during the Vietnam War's Battle of Ia Drang, Snake and his wingman, Maj. Ed "Too Tall to Fly" Freeman, led 16 slick Hueys into Landing Zone X-Ray again and again – hauling in 1st Battalion 7th Cavalry troops, hauling out their wounded, and hauling in resupplies of ammunition, water and medical supplies. When the LZ got so hot that Lt. Col. Hal Moore closed it, "Snake" and "Too Tall" just kept coming.

Both of them earned the Medals of Honor they received for their actions. Scores of the wounded are alive today because of their heroism. "Too Tall" Ed died in August 2008, breaking up a partnership and friendship that lasted half a century. "Snake" Crandall carries on the mission at 81, traveling the United States and war zones around the world, visiting our troops.

– Joseph L. Galloway, co-author with Harold Moore of "We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young" and "We Are Soldiers Still: A Journey Back to the Battlefields of Vietnam"

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24 OMAR BRADLEY

Omar Bradley led the American D-Day invasion, single-handedly planned the Normandy breakout, and engineered the Allied charge across Europe. But he never stood at the head of the parades through liberated towns, preferring to let his subordinates take the accolades. It was one of the ways he was able to get the most from his generals, from the brilliant but mercurial George S. Patton to the far less inspired Courtney Hodges.

Honored in the Army as a master tactician, Bradley is probably best known to the public as the "GI General." The nickname was coined by Ernie Pyle during the Sicily campaign, where Pyle recounted the general's humble ways and his concern for his troops, even as Bradley dodged bullets on the front line. That reputation was cemented by a two-year stint as head of the Veterans Administration. Bradley reshaped the scandal-ridden agency in two years, vastly improving its efficiency as well as its reputation.

Returning to the Army, Bradley became its chief, then the first head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He remained active into the 1970s and is the last man to have held the five-star rank.

From revising doctrine and training to initiating the officers candidate program, Bradley left an indelible mark on the prewar Army. It was his intimate knowledge of that army, as well as his combat and strategic skills, that led to his successes during the war and helped ensure U.S. victory.

– Jim DeFelice, author of "Omar Bradley: General at War"

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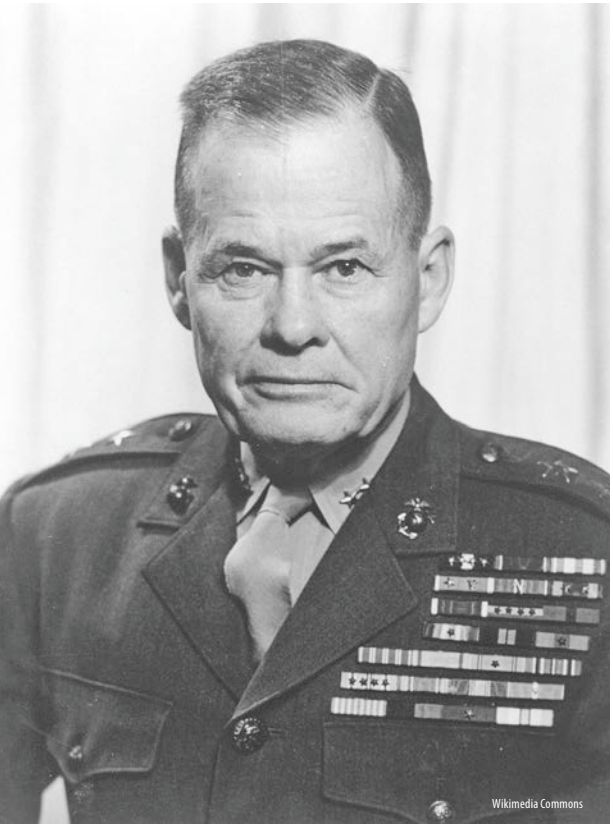

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25 LEWIS "CHESTY" PULLER

He acquired the nickname "Chesty" for the way in which he carried his sub-6-foot frame while on the march. He stands as an icon and an enduring prototype of the modern Marine rifleman.

In prayer every night with his son, he invoked the names of his two boyhood heroes, Robert E. Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson. His grandfather fell to Union fire at Kelly's Ford. But it was against America's foreign enemies that Chesty made his name. He became the most decorated leatherneck in history, with a Silver Star, a Distinguished Service Cross and five Navy Crosses among the many ribbons on his left breast.

His talents on the battlefield were paired with a unique gift for memorable aphorism. Enveloped by Chinese troops in Korea, he told his regiment, "We've been looking for the enemy for several days now. We've finally found them. We are surrounded. That simplifies the problem of getting to these people and killing them."

On the day he retired, at 57, he thanked the enlisted men and junior officers who had made possible his rise from private to three-star general. And today, at Parris Island and Camp Pendleton, Marine Corps boots return the salute every night: "Good night, Chesty Puller, wherever you are!"

For his never-quit spirit, good humor and ferocity to lead, Puller's name resonates with us today.

– James D. Hornfischer, author of "Neptune's Inferno: The U.S. Navy at Guadalcanal"

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28 John J. **Pershing**
29 Neil **Armstrong**
30 Colin **Powell**
31 Dakota **Meyer**
32 Ira **Hayes**
33 John **Glenn**
34 Michael **Monsoor**
35 John **McCain**
36 John **Basilone**
37 Theodore **Roosevelt Jr.**
38 Monica Lin **Brown**
39 William "Tecumseh" **Sherman**
40 Joshua **Chamberlain**
41 Kurt Chew-een **Lee**
42 Dan **Daly**
43 Ted **Williams**
44 R. Lee **Ermey**
45 Nathan **Hale**
46 George "Bud" **Day**
47 Marcus **Luttrell**
48 Charles **Durning**
49 Mary **Walker**
50 Mitchell Red **Cloud**
51 David **Hackworth**
52 Leigh Ann **Hester**
53 Francis **Marion**
54 Ruby **Bradley**
55 George **Dewey**
56 William "Wild Bill" **Guarnere**
57 Jeremiah **Denton**
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59 Sal **Giunta**
60 Guy **Gabaldon**
61 Bill **Mauldin**
62 Ed **McMahon**
63 Bill **Cosby**
64 Ernest **Borgnine**
65 Joe **Foss**
66 Nathanael **Greene**
67 Merlin **German**
68 Matt **Urban**
69 Juan **Rubio**
70 Emil **Kapaun**
71 Joshua **Mooi**
72 Ty **Carter**
73 Jessica **Lynch**
74 Bill "Bojangles" **Robinson**
75 Rodolfo "Rudy" **Hernandez**
76 Deborah **Sampson**
77 Mickey **Rooney**
78 Quentin **Roosevelt**
79 Sara **Edmonds**
80 Leroy **Petry**
81 Dave **Thomas**
82 Bob **Feller**
83 Thomas **Custer**
84 Tibor "Ted" **Rubin**
85 Eddie **Grant**
86 Clint **Romesha**
87 David **Bellavia**
88 Charles **Schulz**
89 Jerry **Coleman**
90 Tim **Kennedy**
91 Bill **Krissoff**
92 Rocky **Marciano**
93 Dale **Dye**
94 Young-Oak **Kim**
95 Gene **Roddenberry**
96 Robert **Leckie**
97 Rod **Serling**
98 Buster **Keaton**
99 Francis **Barlow**
100 Edwin **Hubble**

Voters had the opportunity to submit names, too. Here are a few they would have added to the list:

Danny Dietz, Paul Tibbets, James Stockdale, Ronald Reagan, George Preddy, Hugh Thompson, Kurt Vonnegut, Curtis Lemay, Bob Dole, Matthew Axelson, Harry Truman, Gary Gordon, Randy Shughart, Desmond Doss, George C. Marshall, Chuck Yeager, Eugene Fluckey, James Garner, Roy Benavidez, Father Francis Duffy, Chester Nimitz, Matthew Ridgeway, Smedley Butler, Greg "Pappy" Boyington, William "Bull" Halsey, William Westmoreland and more

View a gallery of all 100 veterans online: ***www.legion.org/belovedveterans***

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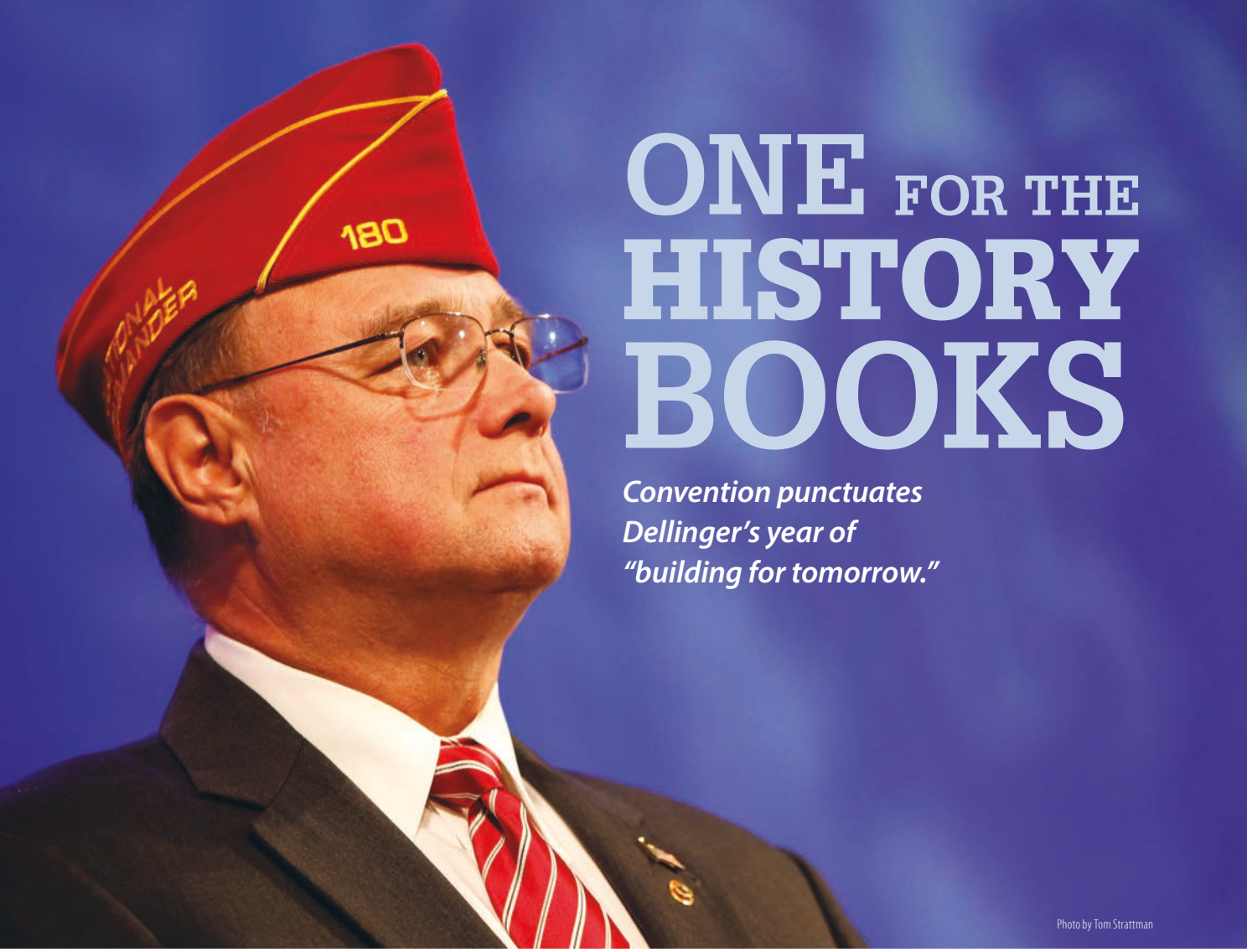

Photo by Tom Strattman

ONE FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS

Convention punctuates Dellinger's year of "building for tomorrow."

A historic year for The American Legion wrapped up with a historic national convention in Charlotte, N.C. Less than four months after American Legion National Commander Daniel Dellinger called for the resignation of Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki and his top two undersecretaries, thousands of Legionnaires traveled to Charlotte.

There, President Barack Obama – in his only public appearance at a veterans service organization's national convention in 2014 – told delegates that while work had been made to correct the problems at VA, more must be done. New VA Secretary Robert McDonald told convention-goers that their contributions to VA reform have "been of great help." And Dellinger himself said that VA continues to be a "system worth saving," and that Legion town hall meetings and Veterans Crisis Command Centers staged across the nation since the VA crisis broke have helped in the reform process. One such center opened in Charlotte during the convention, assisting 283 veterans and family members.

During the national convention, U.S. Army and Marine Corps personnel from Fort Bragg and Fort Benning, Ga., as well as Marine Corps bases at Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point, were able to meet face to face with prospective civilian employers during an American Legion employment summit and career fair.

The convention concluded with the election of Nebraska Legionnaire Mike Helm as 2014-2015 national commander. A Vietnam War-era Army veteran, Helm urged Legionnaires to stay true to the ideals of the organization's founders and use them to chart a course for its future.

As he wrapped up his eventful year as national commander, Dellinger echoed the call for continued growth, saying that there would be a huge gap for America's veterans and military families if the Legion were to vanish. "Who would serve as role models, instilling traditional American values into the next generation?" he asked. "Who would advocate for the next generation of troops, just as we have for veterans since World War I?"

– Steve B. Brooks

Photo by Tom Strattman

Legacy Run donations smash record

Donations made on the floor of the national convention brought this year's Legacy Run total to a record $1 million. More than $435,000 was raised during the five-day ride, which was sponsored by USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Another $510,000 was donated during the convention, while American Legion Charities donated $53,000 on the last day.

Top donors included the Department of Minnesota Legion Riders ($87,000), the Department of Wisconsin (more than $70,000), the South Carolina Legion Riders (more than $43,000), the Department of Pennsylvania ($40,000) and Converse, Texas, Post 593 ($32,000).

Nine Legacy Runs have collectively raised more than $5 million for The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund, which provides college scholarships for the children of U.S. servicemembers killed on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001.

Donate to the Legacy Scholarship Fund today:

www.legion.org/donate

Obama to Legion: VA making progress, but work remains

Speaking to thousands of convention-goers on Aug. 26, President Barack Obama said that progress has been made in correcting problems at the Department of Veterans Affairs since news of falsified appointment records broke in April. But more must be done to restore veterans' trust in their health-care system.

"The misconduct we've seen at too many facilities – with long wait times, veterans denied care, and folks cooking the books – is outrageous and inexcusable," the president said, adding that steps have been taken to get veterans off wait lists and into clinics to receive care, as well as hold accountable those who manipulate or falsifiy records.

Obama also spoke about veteran homelessness, housing and jobs, as well as heightened tensions in the Middle East and possible U.S. responses.

Photo by Lucas Carter

Home Depot commits $1 million for Legion grants

The Home Depot Foundation is dedicating $1 million for American Legion projects nationwide, working through Team Depot, an army of some 350,000 employees and volunteers throughout the United States.

Gaven Gregory, the foundation's executive director, described the program's origins. "When we got involved in this relationship, a lot of it was because those folks in the field (Team Depot) ... said, 'Hey, look, The American Legion is important to us. It's important to our communities. And we want to do more,'" he told convention delegates. Many of the projects include improvements at Legion posts.

Legionnaires are encouraged to contact their local Home Depot stores and ask for Team Depot captains, who can assist with grant applications.

homedepotfoundation.org

Legion, Military.com sign job-portal agreement

A new agreement with Military.com, the nation's top online provider of military news and resources, will bring the site's popular Military Skills Translator and other job-related services and tools provided by parent company Monster to Legion.org.

A new American Legion landing page will host the portal, which will include a translator developed specifically for users with armed forces experience. A team from Monster and Military.com went through military job descriptions, matching each with major career fields in the private sector, examining résumés of successful job applicants and determining the most important skills for each civilian job.

The translator also taps into the Monster.com job database, which asks users to enter their skills and returns a list of all jobs they could apply for in the private sector – jobs weighted in favor of training and experience gained in the military.

The landing page will also include a link to Military.com's Transition Center, which provides services and information designed to help servicemembers re-enter the civilian world.

Veterans Employment and Education Commission Chairman Denise Rohan, left, and Eric Eversole, director of the Hiring our Heroes program, announce a renewed alliance. Photo by Brett Flashnick

Help in the transition

Throughout the convention, The American Legion's Veterans Employment & Education Division continued its ongoing series of workshops, fairs and summits designed to connect servicemembers, veterans and their spouses with information and resources to help them succeed after separating from the military. The numbers tell the story:

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION COMMISSION ROUNDTABLE EMPLOYMENT PANEL, AUG. 23

775 Hiring our Heroes job fairs hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce at the national and local level, with assistance from The American Legion, in the past four years

280,000 People who leave military service every year, about 40 percent of whom never receive transition help

12,000 Army servicememembers who have been certified with some sort of credentialing in the past two years

EMPLOYMENT & EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT, AUG. 25

70 Veterans, active-duty military and spouses who learned about employment opportunities and received job-searching advice from veteran-friendly companies at the summit

10,000 Veterans employed by GE, which has a five-year campaign to hire 1,000 more annually

24,000 Veterans employed by UPS, which has a commitment to hire 50,000 more over the next five years

75 Minimum number of career opportunities CSX committed to have available at the Hiring Our Heroes career fair on Aug. 26

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VOW RENEWAL, AUG. 26

200,000 Veterans who have been assisted in their career pursuits by the relationship in the past three years

80 Approximate number of employers at the convention's Hiring Our Heroes career fair, including FedEx, Hearst Television, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Northrop Grumman, Sears Holding Co. and USAA

1,000 Veterans hired by USAA in the past year alone

1.5 million Active-duty servicemembers expected to leave the service in the next five years

EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM, AUG. 26

$43.1 billion Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits issued to more than 1.2 million veterans since 2009

285,000 Active-duty military servicemembers who enrolled in 850,000 courses in 2013 using military tuition assistance, according to DoD

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The North Carolina delegation – Legionnaires, Auxiliary members and Sons – proudly represented its state during the national convention parade in Charlotte. Photo by Tom Strattman

Perfect day for a parade

In 2002 – the last time The American Legion gathered in Charlotte – a steady downpour forced an early end to the national convention parade. It was a different story this year, with a temperature of 78 and clouds hiding the sun. The American Legion Riders led off the parade, which featured retired Navy Capt. Terry A. Bragg as grand marshal and Past National Commander Jim Koutz as honorary grand marshal. All 55 departments followed, along with past national commanders, Auxiliary and SAL delegations, and American Legion and high school bands. Founding Fathers Brewing Co., a Minnesota-based company that recently announced it will donate a portion of its sales to American Legion posts – sponsored a post-parade party.

See a gallery of convention photos online:

www.legion.org/convention

Members of the Department of Minnesota march down Tryon Street in uptown Charlotte. Photo by Lucas Carter

TOP: *A Maryland Legionnaire proudly marches.* Photo by Tom Strattman

ABOVE: *The Yankee Doodle Band of Post 471 in Rensselaer, N.Y., plays patriotic tunes.* Photo by Tom Strattman

BELOW: *National Commander Dan Dellinger of Virginia waves to the crowd.* Photo by Lucas Carter

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North receives national PR award

The Legion honored retired Marine Corps Lt. Col. Oliver North with the National Commander's Public Relations Award on Aug. 26.

Photo by Lucas Carter

A Fox News host and author of several books about the men and women of the U.S. military, North was honored for "raising public awareness about the honorable nature of military service and the sacrifices made by America's heroes."

North is a longtime member of The American Legion.

Combat trauma surgeon receives Distinguished Service Medal

A former Air Force trauma surgeon who pioneered innovative ways to stop battlefield bleeding received The American Legion Distinguished Service Medal on Aug. 26.

Photo by Lucas Carter

Dr. Donald H. Jenkins, a retired colonel, currently directs the trauma center at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. In 2004, he performed emergency surgeries during the Battle of Fallujah in Iraq.

Thanks to Jenkins' work and that of other military medical pioneers, the United States has experienced a far lower combat fatality rate than recorded in wars prior to 9/11. While deployed to Oman in 2002, Jenkins and his colleagues began using a different transfusion formula that reduced the mortality rate from 70 percent to 20 percent, and re-introduced the use of tourniquets on the battlefield. As a result, mortality rates among U.S. combat casualties were reduced to 8.8 percent, compared to 16.5 percent during the Vietnam War and 22.8 percent during World War II, according to a 2010 national medical conference report.

HAIL TO THE KING

NASCAR legend Richard Petty receives 'Good Guy' Award

Praised for his patriotism and his service to community, "The King" Richard Petty – NASCAR's all-time leader in wins – received the James V. Day "Good Guy" Award at the Past Department Commanders Club luncheon in Charlotte, N.C., on Aug. 25.

"Richard Petty is so much more than just a former race driver and now team owner," National Commander Dan Dellinger said. "He is a great American who is always giving back to the community. By donating his land and, more importantly, his time to Victory Junction, Richard has helped chronically ill children receive life-changing camping experiences. He and his son Kyle have helped educate young people about the safe use of automobile lifts, and he has donated time to Civitan International. Richard Petty Motorsports has also supported paralyzed veterans. The NASCAR culture is often praised for its patriotism. Well, it's no coincidence that Richard Petty is the king of NASCAR."

"It's an honor to be recognized by The American Legion," Petty said. "I've felt it was important to do my best to give back to the community and to those in need. It's just something small we do to help out and hopefully make people's lives better or make them feel good. It's humbling to be rewarded for it."

Petty, who owns the NASCAR record with 200 wins as a driver, spoke with *The American Legion Magazine* after accepting the award.

Why do you think NASCAR remains so popular?

The way I look at it, it started out being popular. The South did not have a sport. Football, baseball and basketball were northern. The race fan is middle America. Just plain old everyday working people ... Most of them get somewhere in a car. They've got a car fantasy, especially in rural areas. They don't take rapid transit. It's all cars. I think everyone is car-oriented, whether they know it or not.

There seems to be a level of patriotism in NASCAR not necessarily found in other sports.

There is something about it. Someone sees the flag, they always have a big deal before the race. Planes fly over. Everybody stands – 99 percent of them. It's very patriotic. I guess the sport lends itself to that. It's so open. We're not in stadiums where the people are let in at one end and go back out.

Aside from the technological changes, is NASCAR the same sport it was when you were a rookie driver?

No, society has changed. When I was growing up, the only way you could get

Photo by Lucas Carter

Photo by Lucas Carter

Sanders, Miller share Legion's Patriot Award

When the Department of Veterans Affairs scandal broke last spring – and deepened as the summer went on – two members of Congress acted to both preserve VA and provide immediate care for America's veterans. For their deeds and service, Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., received The American Legion's Patriot Award on Aug. 27. Sanders, pictured at top, is chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. Miller is chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Richard Petty remains at or near the top of stock-car rankings, from championships won to consecutive years racing. He received the James V. Day "Good Guy" Award during the Past Department Commanders Club luncheon on Aug. 25. Photo by Tom Strattman

anywhere was by car. There weren't any interstates. Everybody depended entirely on a car. As technology got involved and society changed, every generation looked for something a little bit better than the last generation. So it's progressed. In 1949, NASCAR planted a seed. It's still growing. It's got to be a big tree with a bunch of branches. The military is the same way. In 1949, what kind of equipment did you have? Now look at the equipment you've got. Society has changed, so the race has changed.

What are your thoughts on the sport today?

What I see today is a changing of the guard. If you look back over NASCAR history, about every 10 or 12 years you've got a new crowd of people coming in. As old ones drop off, new ones come in. And I could go back about every 10 years and tell you who the main draw was at that particular time. There was David Pearson, Cale Yarborough, Dale Earnhardt, Jeff Gordon, Jimmie Johnson. Now we have a bunch of new guys coming in who are going to take up the gap when the ones start falling off. It happens about every 10 years, where half the names are different, and then you go for about 10 years and it will be about the same.

Do you think NASCAR will stick around?

I don't know what the younger generation is thinking. We have a lot more competition for the entertainment dollar. Now you have people doing flips on cars. Motorcycles. When I came along, it was football, baseball, basketball and racing. You didn't have these X Games and all that stuff. So society will dictate whether we make it or not.

What kind of connections do you have to the military community?

Years ago, my wife and I went on a cruise to Alaska. They had an (American Legion) post over there. Maybe six or seven guys came from the post, got us and took us there. We've been working with the Paralyzed Veterans of America for five or six years. NASCAR and our sponsors have gone to Walter Reed. I went to Vietnam on a Christmas deal with Bob Hope; we went to all the outposts – kind of went undercover with 20 or 30 people, rather than thousands.

– John Raughter

Read more about Richard Petty online:

www.richardpettymotorsports.com

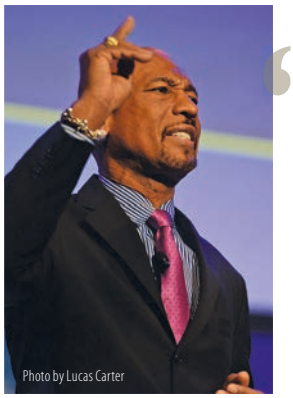
Photo by Lucas Carter

"You worked so tirelessly to get it done, and you got it done ... The hard work you did, your leaders and you ... to protect veterans."

Montel Williams, master of ceremonies and Marine Corps and Navy veteran, praising Legionnaires for their efforts during the VA crisis

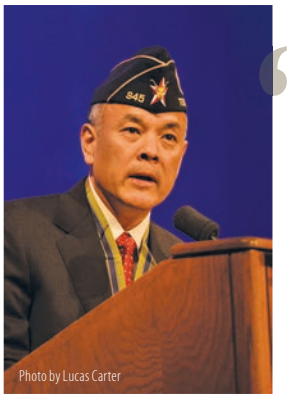
Photo by Lucas Carter

"Hire them. Connect them. Develop them."

Jason Kamiya, USAA senior vice president, offering a formula for companies interested in hiring transitioning servicemembers

SELECTED RESOLUTIONS OF THE 96TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

AMERICANISM

10 Supports efforts to immunize all children

11 Calls for protecting children from unrestricted media

69 Urges purchase of American-made U.S. flags

117 Restore ability of cooperation between Boy Scouts and DoD

118 Opposes changes to Oath of Renunciation and Allegiance

204 Opposes conscientious objector tax diversion

359 Opposes changes to Flag Code regarding conduct during hoisting, lowering or passing of the U.S. flag and national anthem

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

192 Support and defend veteran and military memorials

NATIONAL SECURITY

55 Supports foreign exchange education programs

76 Keep reserve components sustainable as an operational force

79 Fully enforce immigration laws

86 Modify battlefield helmets for more protection against IEDs

87 Supports non-federal roles of the National Guard

170 Grant access to all U.S. military facilities to military retirees and their dependents

181 Eliminate time limitations to petition Boards for Correction of Military Records for relief of an error or injustice

183 Rebuild America's defense industrial base

230 Requests DoD re-evaluate and study giving prescription drugs to active-duty servicemembers

279 Retain Selective Service registration program and expand it to females

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

107 Investigate and prosecute VA employees engaged in fraudulent practices designed to improperly award bonuses or other financial awards

135 Extend presumptive period for service connection for Gulf War veterans with undiagnosed illness

138 Recognize operations in Lebanon (1958), Grenada (1983) and Panama (1989-1990) as periods of war for VA pension purposes

146 Provide VA the ability to purchase medications located outside the United States

202 Establish interim benefits for pending claims over 90 days

246 Include veterans information on U.S. census

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

263 Supports employment services for spouses of servicemembers killed in the line of duty

294 Allow military retirees to apply for positions in federal law enforcement after age 37

302 Supports major enhancements to Montgomery GI Bill

317 Opposes transfer of Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) to VA

321 Supports student veterans return-on-investment education outcomes

327 Affirms support for emerging-Internet-based and peer-financed alternative capital options for veteran-owned small businesses

343 Supports Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program hiring more counselors and employment coordinators

348 Establish transitional housing allotments for 180 days for returning combat veterans

The full text of all 277 resolutions passed at the 96th National Convention is available in the Legion's Digital Archive.

archive.legion.org, click on "Resolutions"

Photo by Tom Strattman

"(Defense Secretary Chuck) Hagel's decision to overhaul how the department conducts accounting ... is about honoring the sacrifice of the individual and providing the fullest possible accounting to their families ... He asked for that plan in February, he got it in March, and he made decisions in March. I've rarely seen that among secretaries."

Alisa Stack, director of the Personnel Accounting Consolidation Task Force, on efforts to improve the process of searching for U.S. servicemembers' remains

Photo by Lucas Carter

"(It's) an investment that's paying dividends. When it comes to sustainability, we believe we have a responsibility to contribute to society and to the environment. We also believe every investment our company makes should return value to our business. Our investment in veterans is ... an investment that's become a competitive advantage."

Myron Gray, vice president of U.S. operations for UPS, on why the shipping giant is committed to hiring veterans

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Photo by Lucas Carter

Rebuilding Together

A group of nearly 50 American Legion, Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion members got their hands dirty Aug. 22 to help improve a Charlotte, N.C., community center that benefits underprivileged youth.

The Legion teamed up with housing organization Rebuilding Together to do some work to the interior and exterior of the Pine Valley Community Center, which serves as a safe haven for up to 60 neighborhood children by providing tutoring and meals after school and during the summer.

"When I got the call that they were going to do this, I couldn't believe it," said Marshalle Peay, president of the Pine Valley board. "I'm just grateful. Everything looks so beautiful. The Legion and Rebuilding Together have made an impact on this community."

Rebuilding Together staff and members of the Legion group placed mulch around trees and in new flower beds, painted the building's interior, cleaned the kitchen and grouted the bathrooms.

"This is a really good project, and I can already see that what we've done today is going to make a big difference," Tina Washington of the Delaware American Legion Auxiliary said. "I think it's wonderful that we have so many volunteers helping and serving the community."

This is the second time that The American Legion and Rebuilding Together have conducted a joint service project during the Legion's national convention. Last year, they installed carpet and painted walls at DeGeorge at Union Station, a shelter for Houston's homeless veterans.

"The American Legion (relationship) has been a great one for us," said Matt de Ferranti, Rebuilding Together's senior director of government relations. "It's gratifying and there's such a spirit of service. This is living out the mission of the Legion as far as serving youth, and also living out our mission of rebuilding communities in need."

On Aug. 25, convention-goers worked with Good360 – a nonprofit organization that builds corporate relationships to raise funds and deliver goods to people in need – to assemble more than 600 personal care kits filled with toiletries and other items, purchased with funds provided by the Home Depot Foundation. The next day, the kits were delivered to the Charlotte office of Community Link, a nonprofit organization that assists homeless veterans.

"We know that we have to earn back veterans' trust, one veteran at a time ... We can't do that unless we're open and transparent about the scope of our challenges and our progress."

Carolyn Clancy, interim VA undersecretary for health, on the agency's progress in recent months and the challenges it still faces

"Very soon, we're going to start losing judges. Unless Congress reauthorizes the maximum strength of nine judges, that strength will be reduced to seven judges at about the time (the court's caseload will increase)."

Photo by Tom Strattman

Alan Lance Sr., a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and a past national commander of The American Legion (1999-2000), on the potential for delays in veterans getting their claim appeals heard just as the number of appeals continues to rise

Photo by Lucas Carter

"This is our flag. This is our country. The legacy it has, we give to our young folks. We are people of action, whether it's with a Bible or a rifle. If you're standing for the red, white and blue, you're standing for the right thing."

National Chaplain Daniel McClure, who spoke at the Patriotic Memorial Service about the importance of paying tribute to the U.S. flag

"We will not have this level of resources from VA, (the) Department of Labor and others on this issue again. This is a unique opportunity."

Photo by Lucas Carter

Elisha Harig-Blaine, senior associate for the National League of Cities, on progress toward eliminating veterans homelessness

Newly elected National Commander Mike Helm of Nebraska, a 43-year American Legion member, is sworn into office by Past National Commander John P. "Jake" Comer. Photo by Tom Strattman

New commander Helm: 'Stay the course'

Michael D. Helm of Norcatur, Kan., was elected national commander of The American Legion on Aug. 28, the final day of the 96th National Convention. Helm, a 43-year member of the Legion, served as commander of the Department of Nebraska from 1987 to 1988 and as a national vice commander from 2003 to 2004. He also served as the national commander's representative to the Legislative Commission, chairman of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission and chairman of the Foreign Relations Commission. He is an Army veteran who served during the Vietnam era.

Auxiliary President Janet Jefford and Sons of The American Legion Commander Mike Moss join Helm on stage following the election. Photo by Tom Strattman

In his acceptance speech, Helm urged Legionnaires to "stay the course" by continuing to do what has made the organization so successful – but not by just maintaining the status quo. "What I mean by 'stay the course' is to continue to live and honor the great traditions and values established by our founders nearly a century ago," he said. "The policies and traditions that got us here will continue to guide us forward."

As for the new national commander's fundraising effort, Helm is more focused on an overall number: $4 million across all Legion programs and initiatives. "I am leaving the choice to you. All I ask is that you give. We will track the fundraising throughout the family and I believe that we will see that total reach $4 million," he said, adding that fundraising should accompany greater outreach to grow the Legion, Auxiliary and Sons organizations.

"We will always be about service first," Helm told convention delegates. "But we can't provide the programs or the service without the membership. Recruit every eligible veteran wth whom you come in contact. Recruit their sons, grandsons, wives, daughters and granddaughters into the American Legion Family."

Convention highlights on video

Watch videos from the 96th National Convention, including:

- President Obama's full speech on the convention floor.
- New VA Secretary Bob McDonald on the way forward for the embattled agency.
- Medal of Honor recipient Kyle White helping present Spirit of Service awards.
- Members of the National Americanism Commission recording a "song of love" for 11-year-old heart transplant patient Paris Burris.

www.legion.org/legiontv

2014 AWARD RECIPIENTS

National Recruiter of the Year
Robert Ouellette Sr.
Poolesville, Md.

National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year
Andrew D. Aninsman
Bensalem Township Police Department Bucks County, Pa.

National Firefighter of the Year
Sara A. Shaffer
Fire/Emergency Medical Services Department Prince George's County, Md.

Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy
For showing the greatest activity in use of The American Legion School Medal Awards
Department of Pennsylvania

Daniel J. O'Connor Americanism Trophy
For conducting the best all-around Americanism activities
Department of Virginia

Consolidated Post Report Winners
Departments of Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oregon, Virginia, Wisconsin

Frank N. Belgrano Jr. Trophy
For support of Boy Scouts of America
Department of North Carolina

Photo by Tom Strattman

Fourth Estate Award
Print
The Daily News
Jacksonville, N.C.

Broadcast
NBC4 Washington

New Media
Washington Examiner
Washington

Employer of the Year
For companies and businesses dedicated to hiring veterans

Small Business
M1 Support Services Abilene, Texas

Mid-Sized Business
L-3 Communications ASD Fort Bragg, N.C.

Large Business
North Carolina Food Service Fayetteville, N.C.

Enhance the Lives of Disabled Persons Award
Sioux Steel Company Sioux Falls, S.D.

Employer of Older Workers Award
Society of St. Vincent de Paul North Idaho Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Homeless Veterans Outreach Award
Department of Oregon

Employment Service Local Office Award
Brazos Valley Workforce Solutions Bryan, Texas

Local Veterans Employment Representative of the Year
Robert O'Keefe
Ohio Department of Job & Family Services Columbus, Ohio

O.L. Bodenhamer Trophy
No. 1 in membership at June 14 report
Department of Colorado

Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist of the Year
Roy M. Fillion
Job Service North Dakota, Fargo, N.D.

Garland D. Murphy Jr. Award
Based on actual contributions received during the 2013-2014 American Legion Child Welfare Foundation year
Detachment of Ohio

William F. Lenker National Service Trophy
For best supporting and implementing programs to benefit veterans and their families
Department of Minnesota

U.S. "Udie" Grant Legacy Award
Based on combined total donations of American Legion Family to the Child Welfare Foundation
Detachment of Florida

Color Guard Contest
Military Class
Dorie Miller Memorial Post 331 Orlando, Fla.

Military Open Class
Harrisburg Post 472 Houston

Advancing/ Retrieving Colors
Harrisburg Post 472 Houston

SPIRIT OF SERVICE AWARDS

ARMY
Spc. Cassandra Rousayne

NAVY
Petty Officer 2nd Class Porfirio Pimentel

MARINE CORPS
Cpl. Ricardo Gonzalez

AIR FORCE
Staff Sgt. Jessica Day

COAST GUARD
Operations Spc. 3rd Class Kristina Manson

2014 YOUTH CHAMPIONS

ORATORICAL CHAMPION
Ashwath Kumar Columbia, Mo.

BOYS NATION PRESIDENT
Matthew Ellow Laceys Spring, Ala.

EAGLE SCOUT OF THE YEAR
Joseph Blaisse Newtown Square, Pa.

JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS SPORTER CHAMPION
Antonio "Andre" Gross, Webster, N.Y.

JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS PRECISION CHAMPION
Michael Steinel New Philadelphia, Ohio

2013 BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR
Anthony Harrold Brooklawn, N.J.

2013 BASEBALL ALL-ACADEMIC TEAM CAPTAIN
Matthew Attig York, Pa.

Photo by Tom Strattman

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WILLIAM R. BRYANT
National Vice Commander | Central Region
HOME: Topping, Va.
MEMBERSHIP: 41 years, Post 28
MILITARY SERVICE: Marine Corps Reserve, 1965-1971 (various times)
OCCUPATION: Virginia Department of Transportation, retired
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., post vice cmdr., post adj., dept. cmdr., dept. vice cmdr.
NATIONAL POSITIONS: Alt. Nat'l Exec. Cmte., Nat'l Exec. Cmte., Aerospace Cmte., Finance Cmsn. Liaison Cmte., Legislative Cncl., Public Relations Cmsn., Public Relations Liaison Cmte., Subcmte. on Committees
REGION: *District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin*

DOUGLAS C. HAGGAN
National Vice Commander | Northeast Region
HOME: Indianapolis
MEMBERSHIP: 39 years, Post GR05
MILITARY SERVICE: Air Force, 1971-1992
OCCUPATION: Retired
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., post sgt.-at-arms, dept. cmdr., dept. vice cmdr., dept. adj., several Foreign and Outlying Departments and Posts of The American Legion (FODPAL) offices
NATIONAL POSITIONS: Homeland & Personal Security Cmte., Unconventional Forces & Intelligence Cmte.
REGION: *Connecticut, Delaware, France, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont*

GERALD L. JACOBS
National Vice Commander | Western Region
HOME: Torrington, Wyo.
MEMBERSHIP: 41 years, Post 5
MILITARY SERVICE: Army, 1971-1974
OCCUPATION: Communications company area plant supervisor
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., post vice cmdr., post chaplain, dept. cmdr., dept. first vice cmdr., dept. chaplain
NATIONAL POSITIONS: Public Relations Cmsn., Nat'l Flag Alliance, Public Relations Cmte., Public Relations Advisory, Public Relations Liaison
REGION: *Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Mexico, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Philippines, Utah, Washington, Wyoming*

RICHARD W. NEVILLE
National Vice Commander | Southeast Region
HOME: Clayton, N.C.
MEMBERSHIP: 40 years, Post 71
MILITARY SERVICE: Army, 1964-1966
OCCUPATION: Deputy sheriff, retired
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., post 1st vice cmdr., post second vice cmdr., post asst. adj., post historian, district chaplain, district vice cmdr., district cmdr., dept. vice cmdr., dept. cmdr.
NATIONAL POSITIONS: Americanism Cncl., Veterans Preference Cmte., Distinguished Guests Cmte.
REGION: *Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas*

PAUL O. SANFORD
National Vice Commander | Midwest Region
HOME: Newton, Kan.
MEMBERSHIP: 32 years, Post 23
MILITARY SERVICE: Army, 1963-1969
OCCUPATION: Social worker, retired
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., post vice cmdr., district vice cmdr., district cmdr., dept. cmdr., dept. vice cmdr., dept. master-at-arms
NATIONAL POSITIONS: Distinguished Guests Cmte., Marketing Cmte.
REGION: *Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota*

SUSAN MASON
National Historian
HOME: Sorrento, Fla.
MEMBERSHIP: 14 years, Post 357
MILITARY SERVICE: Army, 1976-2000, retired
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., post adj., dept. historian

TIERIAN CASH
National Chaplain
HOME: Lincolnton, N.C.
MEMBERSHIP: Four years, Post 30
MILITARY SERVICE: Navy, 1980-2010
OCCUPATION: Captain, Navy Chaplain Corps, retired
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post chaplain, dept. chaplain

RAWLIN E. HAGAN JR.
National Sergeant-at-Arms
HOME: Beatrice, Neb.
MEMBERSHIP: 46 years, Post 290
MILITARY SERVICE: Army, 1966-1968
OCCUPATION: Retired
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., post adj., post vice cmdr., post finance officer, district cmdr., district vice cmdr.
NATIONAL POSITIONS: Public Relations Cmsn.

DONALD L. SUCHY
Aide to the National Commander
HOME: Valparaiso, Neb.
MEMBERSHIP: 28 years, Post 371
MILITARY SERVICE: Air Force/Air National Guard, 1968-1975
OCCUPATION: Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., retired
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., district cmdr.
NATIONAL POSITIONS: Children & Youth Cmsn.

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Singer Joe Bonsall explains why the quartet, now allied with The American Legion, continues to delight audiences.

The Oak Ridge Boys – the iconic and unabashedly patriotic quartet known for fusing gospel, country and rock at a time when crossover tunes like their hit song "Elvira" were revolutionizing the American pop music scene in the '70s and '80s – have roots that run deeper than the 40-plus years this particular foursome has been together under one name.

The group originally known as the Oak Ridge Quartet started performing near the end of World War II. Based in Knoxville, Tenn., where the atomic bomb that ended the war in the Pacific was being developed, the quartet had made enough of a name for itself to land regular bookings at Nashville's Grand Ole Opry by the fall of 1945. Over the years, more than 30 different singers performed under the Oak Ridge name, and *Time* magazine featured the group in the mid-1950s as one of the nation's top-drawing gospel acts.

All that happened before the current set of Oaks got together. But legacy matters greatly to the Grammy-winning performers, who still tour almost continuously and last spring released a new live album, *Boys Night Out*.

William Lee Golden, of flowing beard and subterranean baritone, was first among the current group to join the Oaks. His arrival in 1965 was followed by that of Duane Allen in 1966. Richard Sterban joined in 1972 and Joe Bonsall in 1973.

They credit shared values, faith and love of music to the continuing success of the group, which has had more than 30 Top 10 singles, 12 gold records, three platinum albums, one double platinum album and a double-platinum single.

The Oak Ridge Boys were recently named celebrity spokesmen to help raise awareness about assistance The American Legion provides for veterans and their families.

Bonsall, also an author and the son of World War II veterans, recently spoke with *The American Legion Magazine*.

Wholesome, patriotic values aren't always a script for success in today's music industry. Why do they work for The Oak Ridge Boys?

I think a lot of it has to do with our upbringing. All four of us were taught from childhood to tell the truth, to work hard, to honor God and to respect those who have paid the price for our freedoms. I am not really sure what works for other artists. There are many roads to success. But what matters to me is how *we* do things.

Joe Bonsall is a 40-year member of The Oak Ridge Boys and an author. He tells his parents' story in the book "GI Joe and Lillie."

The current lineup of the band recently celebrated 40 years of performing together and 41 million records sold. How have you held this act together over the years?

I am writing a new book right now on The Oak Ridge Boys that will be released in the spring of 2015, and in the writing I have tried to dig deep and explore this answer. All of the stock answers are very true. We are living out our dreams. We love what we do. We have never even been able to plan on how to slow down, let alone stop. But I think the river runs deeper than that. We are a part of history, and none of us wants to see that end. It is in our DNA to keep being The Oak Ridge Boys until God tells us it is time to quit. As long as He provides the health and the good vocals, I say we will sing until we drop.

Appreciation for military sacrifice runs through much of your music. What kind of personal connections do you have with those who served?

Actually, we have many. My dad and mom both served in World War II, so I have grown up with the flag waving at my house every single day. The other guys have family members and dear friends who have served as well. We all love our military, and we are very thankful for the sacrifices they have made and are making today all around the world.

When you think about military men and women coming home from wartime service today, what do you think they need most?

Recently, the Department of Veterans Affairs has been going through a lot of failure and change, and many of our returning veterans with various

needs have fallen through the cracks. This cannot stand. The physical and mental needs of our kids coming home from wars today are staggering, and I think they deserve to be cared for and looked after more than ever before.

It's common for you to support values-driven organizations such as Boy Scouts of America, Habitat for Humanity, the National Anthem Project and the Legion. With so many groups asking to share your talents, how do you decide?

I have heard Duane Allen say that we can affect people in one of three ways: positively, negatively or not at all. The Oaks choose the positive, so when we are presented with an opportunity to serve in some capacity we always say yes. Of course we can't fit in everything that comes our way, but we try when the organization is special and doing great works.

You have also performed for five U.S. presidents. What does that mean to you?

I think any time that we have performed for a president it has been a very special honor for us. Our friendship with George and Barbara Bush has been especially meaningful to us. We have been singing for No. 41 since he was vice president in 1982. We still sing for him today. Knowing these patriots has made us all better Americans.

Almost everyone has a personal connection, as well, to The American Legion. When you think of the Legion, what comes to mind?

The way the Legion looks after our veterans. It is an honor to be associated with our American Legion. They are relevant and cutting-edge when it comes to dealing with returning vets who have slipped through those cracks, and they are also leading the charge in helping to fix VA, which we really need right now. I am thankful that The American Legion exists, and I hope that The Oak Ridge Boys can help bring some attention to the work they are doing right now, especially identifying and dealing with the post-traumatic stress affecting so many of our returning warriors.

What compelled you to write the book "GI Joe and Lillie," about your parents' relationship?

Well, the song came first, and after I wrote the song I wrote a small story based on the song. We turned it in to "Chicken Soup for the Veteran's Soul," and they turned it down. My associate Kathy Harris, who knew my parents quite well, would not let it go, so she pitched it around some more. New Leaf Press was interested, but they wanted a longer story for perhaps a gift book. I made it longer, and they called for a meeting. They told me that the country was in dire need of a story like this, and could I write a book? So I said yes and went to work.

As a side note, my mom wrote down a lot of things over the years. She always believed that her and Daddy's story needed to be told. I told her on her deathbed that I would write the book, and it is such a blessing that it all worked out. After she passed, my sister Nancy found all of these memoirs of hers, and I utilized most of them in one way or the other. To me, this is Lillie's book, and her voice and her story has now been heard. This would have made her very happy.

What is the bigger message of the book?

Love, loyalty and service. Even after Daddy had a debilitating stroke, my mom never gave up on him. She dedicated her life to him and us kids. I mean prayerful and total dedication. She was very inspiring to everyone who knew her.

You followed that up with "From My Perspective," another book with a big message. Can you explain some of that and how faith has guided your muse?

I cannot write for the sake of writing. I think the work should inspire on some level, and I think that God should be honored. "From My Perspective" is a cool little collection of stories about music, faith, veterans and even some humor, but I hope that when people read my writings Jesus and His love and guidance always shine through.

I am just now finishing a new book for spring of 2015 titled "On the Road with The Oak Ridge Boys." It is an inside look at the group, and it is very fresh and actually a lot of fun. My goal is still to inspire, and I think I have achieved this.

There's a hungry market for music and books about faith, family, patriotism and wholesome values. Why do you think more artists and writers don't consider that audience?

Well, I know of many that do, but as you say, many do not. Everyone is different, and everyone's pathway turns down a different side road from time to time. For me, I have to follow my heart, and my heart always tells me to do things that my mom would be proud of. I may fall short from time to time, but I assure you I am always trying to do things right.

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BY THE NUMBERS

181,129

Cases handled by American Legion post service officers in 2013

101

People who received assistance at the Legion's Veterans Crisis Command Center (VCCC) in Honolulu in September

900

Wounded warriors and family members treated to a day at Six Flags Fiesta Texas on Sept. 13, courtesy of the Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors program

$300,885

Amount awarded in retroactive benefits to 283 veterans and family members during the Legion's VCCC in Charlotte, N.C., in August

117,197

Funeral honors performed by American Legion posts in 2013

Photo by Rik Beirlaen

Flanders Field Post BE02 Chaplain Gavin Wainwright presented a grave adoption certificate to Danny Demeulemeester and Dorine Allegaert of Belgium.

HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

Flanders Field post starts adopt-a-grave program

On Aug. 16, more than 400 people attended a grave adoption ceremony at Flanders Field American Cemetery in Belgium, as part of a local campaign pairing citizens with the graves of U.S. war dead far from their families.

"Last year, the cemetery's superintendent, Chris Arseneault, asked me if The American Legion could implement an adoption program for the graves of World War I soldiers," says Joseph Schram, commander of Flanders Field Post BE02. "With the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the war in 2014, we decided to wait for August to conduct the adoption ceremony."

Each of the cemetery's 368 graves, and 43 names from the Wall of Missing, now has a volunteer who will tend the grave, as well as place flags for Memorial Day and Belgium's Remembrance Day.

More than 100 applications came in the first week; by August, all the graves had volunteers. Many are residents of nearby Waregem; others are from the Netherlands, Germany and the United States.

The grave adoption program is another symbol of the rebirth of Post BE02. "The post was first organized in 1933 but until recently was dormant for 15 years," Schram says. "I was asked to re-establish the post in 2013, and within a year we had over 50 new members. As our membership keeps increasing, so will our programs."

HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

NYC parade welcomes Legionnaires, posts

American Legion posts in New York City are encouraging Legion Family members – Legionnaires, Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion – to participate in the city's Veterans Day parade, which is the nation's largest.

America's Parade will start at 11:25 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 11, and conclude about 3:30 p.m. The 1.3-mile route goes up Fifth Avenue from 26th Street to 52nd Street.

Last year, about 80 Legionnaires from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, California and even Ireland marched in the parade, said Sean Powers, commander of 9-11 Memorial Post 2001 in New York City.

"We talk a lot about veterans serving veterans," Powers said. "This event is all about veterans honoring veterans. That is one of the things I got the biggest kick out of last year. There were guys from World War II marching side by side with guys and gals still serving. It's neat to see the age difference and different generations marching as brothers and sisters."

For more information about participating in the parade, email ***parade@americanlegion.com***.

Photo by Doug Malin

✓Yes

✓Yes

xNo

✓Yes

✓Yes

✓Yes

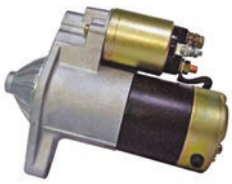
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Photo by Lucas Carter

MEMORIAM

Longtime NEC member Jerry Hedrick passes away

Longtime Department of North Carolina National Executive Committeeman Jerry Hedrick passed away unexpectedly during the 96th National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., on Aug. 25. He was serving as president of the North Carolina National Convention Corp.

A 45-year member of Jim Leonard Post 8 in Lexington, N.C., Hedrick had served on the NEC since 1994 and on the National Resolutions Subcommittee since 1997 – including the past six years as chairman. He served on many other national committees as well, and as department commander of North Carolina (1987-1988).

A Vietnam War Army veteran, Hedrick worked for the U.S. Postal Service for more than 30 years. He played a big role in helping Shelby, N.C., become the permanent home of the American Legion Baseball World Series.

During his remarks to the convention on Aug. 26, then-National Commander Dan Dellinger praised Hedrick for being "a leader in every sense of the term. So much of what you will see and hear at this North Carolina convention is because of Jerry's hard work."

North Carolina Adjutant Frank Stancil called Hedrick "Mr. American Legion," adding, "He was his post's commander. With all of the things he was involved with on the national level, he was still involved heavily in his own department and in his own post."

VERBATIM

"We understand the reluctance to commit U.S. ground troops to more combat after years of war. However, we also understand the brutality and threat that this group represents. No war has ever been won without boots on the ground, and U.S. troops are the best troops on the ground anywhere. We should not eliminate the possibility."

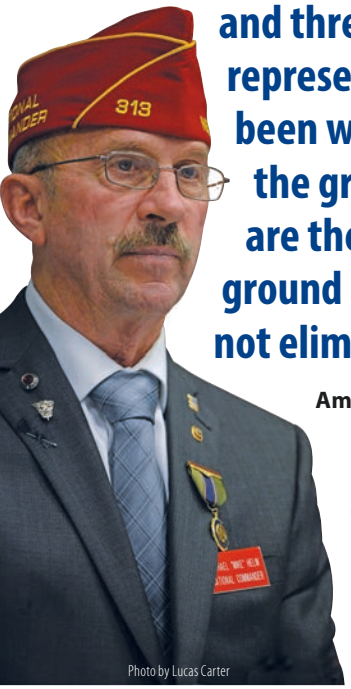
Photo by Lucas Carter

American Legion National Commander Mike Helm, responding to President Barack Obama's announcement that the United States would lead an international coalition to "roll back" the terrorist group known as the Islamic State. Obama said his strategy will have military, diplomatic and economic components, but would not include ground troops.

CENTENNIAL

Post 14, Smyrna, Del.

In 1924, members of David C. Harrison Post 14 in Smyrna, Del., founded the first American Legion ambulance service. Veterans volunteered to transport sick and injured people to hospitals in Smyrna, Wilmington, Dover and Milford. Post 14's ambulance service is still in operation today.

Kelly Polito, a member of Post 14 and a 50-year ambulance volunteer, drove Cadillacs to transport patients in the 1960s.

www.ambulance64.org

Share your post's legacy

Upload photos, print material and videos related to your post's history on the Legion's Centennial Celebration site.

www.centennial.legion.org

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CAREERS

Résumé truths

I've been a professional résumé writer for more than 30 years, and I know the following to be true:

Content always dictates format. Write your résumé, then format it for a nice visual presentation and ease in readability. Do not pick a format that looks great for your friend's résumé and try to make it work for you; you'll be shortchanging yourself.

Objective drives content. Suppose you managed secure networks in your last position 80 percent of the time, with an added responsibility for training 20 percent of the time. Your current goal is a job in training. When writing your résumé, shift the emphasis to focus on what you want your reader to see: training first, networks second.

Tell your career story. Although facts and figures are important, they mean much more when wrapped into the story of what was happening where you worked: the size of the organization, challenges you overcame, opportunities you took advantage of, and efforts of you and your team members to make things better, more efficient, more productive and less costly.

Showcase achievements. Everyone in logistics performs the same basic functions. Don't focus on those. Instead, highlight the size of the logistics organization, dollar value or volume of materials, and things you did to enhance performance and quality or reduce costs and personnel needs. Don't just "tell" the facts; "sell" your experience.

It's all about keywords. In today's world of online job searching, keywords are more important than ever before. Be certain your résumé is filled with the right ones for your targeted profession. Companies and recruiters search for qualified candidates using keywords that include hard skills (e.g., budgeting), soft skills (e.g., oral communications), company names, degrees, certifications and more.

Follow these résumé rules and you'll be certain to be found by recruiters and hiring managers who have the jobs you want.

Wendy Enelow is co-author of "Expert Résumés for Military-to-Civilian Transitions" and "Expert Résumés for Career Changers."

LEGIONNAIRES IN ACTION

Share your story of support for post-9/11 veterans

Throughout the country and beyond, since the beginning of the war on terrorism, The American Legion has been helping post-9/11 military veterans and their families in numerous ways, from benefits assistance to college and career opportunities.

The Legion's Media & Communications Division is looking for personal stories of connection between the nation's largest veterans organization and the newest generation of wartime veterans and their families.

If you or a family member has an inspiring story of positive American Legion connection with the post-9/11 generation, go to **www.legion.org/post911support** or **www.legiontown.org** and share your story.

Personal stories of Legion support will appear in an upcoming issue of *The American Legion Magazine*, the nation's most widely circulated veterans magazine. They may also be used online or in social media. Names will be used only with permission.

EDUCATION

Eligibility for GI Bill benefit transfers

Q: *I am in the Navy and have transferred my GI Bill benefits to my spouse and child. When wll they be able to use the benefits?*

A: Your spouse can begin using the transferred GI Bill benefits after you (the transferor) have completed six years of service. Your child has to be at least 18 (or have completed secondary-school requirements) to begin using the transferred benefits, and you must have completed 10 years of service. They remain eligible to use their transferred entitlements until the earliest of the following dates:

FOR A SPOUSE

- The transferor's ending date of eligibility (generally 15 years from your last discharge from active duty)
- The ending date specified by the transferor (if one was specified)
- The effective date the transferor revokes the transferred entitlement

FOR A CHILD

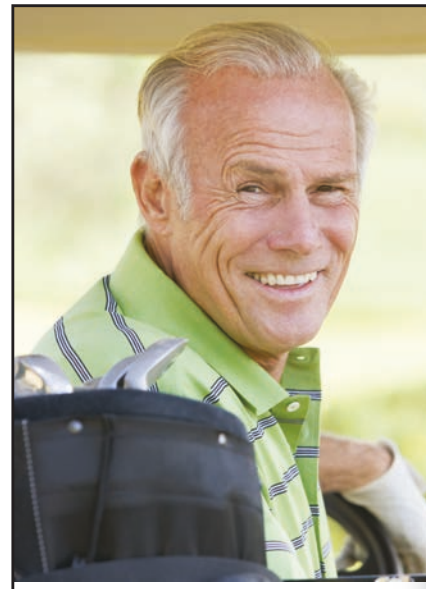
- His or her 26th birthday
- The ending date specified by the transferor (if one was specified)
- The effective date the transferor revokes the transferred entitlement

Remember that as transferor, you retain the right to revoke or modify the transfer at any time.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Arizona. ***askvalerie@legion.org***

"I encourage you to follow the law in all instances."

U.S. Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas, senior member of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee, replying to IRS Commissioner John Koskinen, who on Sept. 10 told the committee, "Whenever we can, we follow the law." Since taking over the agency last December, Koskinen has been asked to answer for the IRS' targeting of conservative groups. Source: *The Hill*



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ASK A SERVICE OFFICER

VA clothing allowance

Cajun Comeau
Department Service Officer, North Carolina

Q: ***Is a clothing allowance available with VA disability compensation?***

A: Veterans who have unique clothing needs as a result of a service-related disability or injury may receive a supplement to their disability compensation. The clothing allowance reimburses you if your clothing is permanently damaged by a prosthetic or orthopedic appliance or a prescribed medication. If eligible, you can receive a one-time or yearly allowance for reimbursement.

You may receive a clothing allowance as a veteran who uses either of the following:

- Prosthetic or orthopedic appliance, such as a wheelchair or crutches, because of a service-connected disability (soft and flexible devices, such as an elastic stocking, are not included).
- Medication prescribed by a physician for a service-connected skin condition that causes permanent stains or otherwise damages outer garments.

Additional clothing allowances may be provided if more than one appliance or medication is used and/or affects more than one type of garment. Payments are based on the rate table set by law. To receive annual payment, you must establish eligibility by Aug. 1 of the year for which you claim payment.

To apply, submit the Application for Annual Clothing Allowance (VA Form 10-8678) to the prosthetic representative at your local VA medical center. It is highly advised that you seek assistance from an accredited service officer to assist in filing. If you have not submitted a claim for disability compensation, you must complete the application prior to filing for a clothing allowance.

Applications are collected throughout the year and held until the closing date of Aug. 1. They are then processed, and veterans receive payments between Sept. 1 and Oct. 31. This is an annual payment and will only be made during this time frame. If you have not received your payment by Oct. 31, you should contact your local prosthetic representative.

Find an American Legion service officer in your state: ***www.legion.org/serviceofficers***

Do you have a question for Department of North Carolina Service Officer Cajun Comeau about the claims process or veterans benefits in general? Send it to ***askso@legion.org***.

The Aegis destroyer USS Hopper *fires an interceptor missile during a test off Kauai, Hawaii, in 2009.* DVIDS

NATIONAL SECURITY

War in the Gulf ... of Mexico?

The Pentagon is exploring ways to defend against cruise-missile attacks emanating from the Gulf of Mexico, the *National Journal*'s Global Security Newswire (GSN) reports.

"A 2013 military exercise pitted systems such as Patriot interceptors, Aegis warships and combat aircraft against potential cruise-missile or short-range ballistic missiles fired from the Gulf," according to GSN. "But the drill highlighted a particular vulnerability to cruise missiles lobbed from that region," GSN adds, citing information shared by Gen. Charles Jacoby, NORTHCOM commander, in recent congressional testimony.

"The idea is to cobble together enough stuff (so) that maybe something will work, but none of these systems were designed for cruise-missile defense," Kingston Reif of the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation told GSN.

GSN notes that the fiscal 2014 defense authorization bill mentions the need to counter "ballistic missiles that could be launched from vessels on the seas around the United States, including the Gulf of Mexico."

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Superpower popularity contest

7 percent of Japanese view China favorably
66 percent of Japanese view America favorably

31 percent of Indians view China favorably
55 percent of Indians view America favorably

38 percent of Filipinos view China favorably
92 percent of Filipinos view America favorably

16 percent of Vietnamese view China favorably
76 percent of Vietnamese view America favorably

56 percent of South Koreans view China favorably
82 percent of South Koreans view America favorably

Source: Pew

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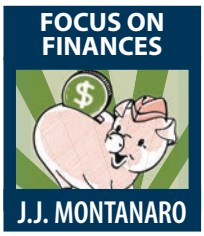
PERSONAL FINANCE

The pros and cons of borrowing from yourself



Nearly a third of Americans have at some point borrowed from their retirement plan at work, according to a recent TIAA-CREF survey.

Call me a skeptic, but from my experience that number seems low. And when it comes to this topic, that's not necessarily a good thing.

If you need cash, borrowing from your plan at work may seem tempting. After all, most offer loans of half your account value or $50,000, whichever is the lesser amount.

But before you jump online to fill out an application, let's explore the pros and cons.

The pros

- *It's easy.* Typically, you fill out a form and have the money in a few days. There's no credit check or drawn-out application process. You usually make payments via payroll deduction.
- *It's competitive.* The interest rate is often low, especially compared to a credit card. For example, a typical rate might be the prime rate plus 1 percent – today that's 4.25 percent.
- *The interest goes to you.* You keep the interest you pay, not some other lender.
- *Its use isn't restricted.* Simply put, you can use it for anything.
- *It has a definitive end.* Most plans allow you to set up your repayment schedule from one to five years (perhaps longer in some situations).

The cons

- *It could reduce what you're saving.* This may be the scariest aspect of borrowing from a work retirement plan. Some plans forbid contributions while the loan is being paid back. What's more, approximately 60 percent of recipients voluntarily reduce or eliminate their contributions during payback, according to the TIAA-CREF survey. Bad idea.
- *The bull could pass you by.* If the markets go up, you could miss out on the growth your loaned money might have earned.
- *The bear may lurk around the corner.* If the markets head south, that low interest rate you're paying yourself may not look all that bad.
- *Job loss requires payback.* In most situations, you're required to pay back the loan within 60 days if you leave the employer. If you're unable, the outstanding balance could be subject to taxes and early-withdrawal penalties.
- *It's habit-forming.* According to TIAA-CREF, nearly half of those who take out loans will do so multiple times.
- *It doesn't fix the core issue.* A whopping 46 percent of survey respondents took a loan to pay off other debts. If you haven't fixed the reasons you have the debt in the first place, you may end up with a loan and a bunch of new debt you accumulate after "consolidation."

In the end, it's your call. An employer plan may be a practical and economic place to access money. However, in the midst of the current U.S. retirement crisis, it's important not to overlook the potential negatives.

Tread carefully, and don't lose your retirement savings momentum.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for him online.

www.legion.org/usaa/focusonfinances

ACTIVE DUTY

Navy NERDs

U.S. Navy

The Navy will soon be full of NERDs – but not necessarily the kind with pocket protectors and white tape on their glasses. NERDs – short for "Navy E-Reader Device" – are personal electronic handhelds specially designed for sailors to access preloaded books, from popular fiction titles to recommended Navy readings.

Unlike other handhelds, the NERD has no ports or Wi-Fi connections, which means additional materials cannot be loaded onto it. As *The Wall Street Journal* reports, the NERD will save space by decreasing the number of traditional books on vessels; plus, NERDs cannot serve as "conduits for malicious software and other security threats."

VERBATIM

This is my fourth year, and I've never seen a dessert served in the school. The kids like kale here, and they eat broccoli.

Media Bakery

Shelley Mathias, principal of Edmunds Elementary School in Burlington, Vt., on new state rules banning brownies and other bake-sale goodies in schools and as fundraisers for extracurricular activities. The policy is based on nutrition standards required under the federal "Smart Snacks in School" program.

Source: VermontWatchdog.org

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How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** fax **(317) 630-1280,** e-mail **reunions@legion.org** or submit information via our website, **www.legion.org/reunions.**

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing only once a year.** Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** fax **(317) 630-1280** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org.**

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.** Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

ARMY

3rd Bn 8th Inf 4th Inf Div (Vietnam, 1966-1970), San Antonio, 7/30-8/2, Steve Edmunds, (949) 294-6981, edmundsdb@aol.com; **8th Inf Div Assn (Germany, Europe & Desert Storm),** Fort Knox, KY, 7/24-26, David Flores, (909) 973-9967, aps56march@yahoo.com; **11th PFDR Co 1st Cav Div (AM),** Washington, 11/9-12, Rob Wolaver, (765) 490-9094, r.wolaver@yahoo.com; **57th Assault Heli Co,** Possum Kingdom Lake, TX, 8/28-30, Jim McKenzie, (817) 821-4070, jimnikkimck@embarqmail.com; **173rd Abn Bde,** San Diego, 5/2-6, Art Martinez, (909) 623-3802, abmmartinez4@yahoo.com

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COAST GUARD

***Sebago* WPG/WHEC 42,** Pensacola, FL, 9/18-20, Lee Wonnacott, (704) 209-3638, rm2wonnacott@sebagosailors.org

JOINT

Opn Desert Storm, Galveston, TX, 10/11-18, Jill Etter, (210) 508-9953, desertstorm25th@gmail.com; **Welcome Home Vietnam Vets,** Jacksonville, AR, 4/11, DannaKay Duggar, (501) 241-1943, jaxmilmuseum@gmail.com

MARINES

Basic School Class 2-80 & IOC Class 1980 (Quantico, VA, Jan-Aug 1980), Quantico, VA, 9/18-20, Kevin Horgan, (404) 828-4326, khorgan@ups.com; **Ontos Crewmen,** San Diego, 5/5-9, Louis Najfus, (678) 546-1444, najfus@hotmail.com

NAVY

***Ashland* LSD 1/48,** Indianapolis, 6/10-13, Robert Parrish, (217) 871-9706, rep1933@yahoo.com; ***Ault* DD 698,** Charleston, SC, 4/30-5/4, Tony Fuentes, (210) 495-9554, fountain48@sbcglobal.net; ***Buck* DD 761,** Branson, MO, 5/3-7, Joe Wagy, (209) 765-5575, jmwagy@volcano.net; ***Conserver* ARS 39,** Charleston, SC, 4/23-26, Kevin Weaver, (610) 780-5484, kcwrdc@yahoo.com; ***Cony* DD/DDE 508,** Myrtle Beach, SC, 4/29-5/3, Charles Heilman, (410) 952-6796, connieheilman1@gmail.com; **East Coast All Seabee,** Hampton, VA, 2/27-3/1, Tom Marone, seabeemacd40@verizon.net; ***Rich* DD/DDE 820,** Norfolk, VA, 4/27-5/1, Gary Medlin, (757) 361-5826, reunion2015@ussrich.org; **Site One, Holy Loch, Scotland,** Providence, RI, 6/10-14, Roland Kitridge, (508) 877-2960; ***Stephen Potter* DD 538,** Charleston, SC, 4/26-30, Robert Hegel, (727) 376-4625, rhegelnypd@tampabay.rr.com; **TACAMO Comm Vets Assn,** Marietta, GA, 11/7-11, Cheryl Vos, (859) 609-4624, tacamocommunity@gmail.com; ***The Sullivans* DD 537/DDG 68,** Jacksonville, FL, 5/27-30, Carl DePoy, (352) 343-8363, k8bbt5732@yahoo.com; ***Will Rogers* SSBN 659,** Bremerton, WA, 8/27-30, David Talley, (210) 834-4234, info@usswillrogers.com

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Post 381, CA: Archie R. Bates, Peter W. Bernard, Mark J. Gerin, A.J. Lavezzari, Clyde Nakamura, Roy C. Niebuhr

Post 344, FL: John J. Evans, Charles M. Mead, Joseph J. Principi

IN SEARCH OF

1st Bde 6th Inf 198th Light Inf Bde 23rd Americal Div B Co 1st Plt (Chu Lai, Vietnam), Larry "Doc" Waltman, 1072 P.T. Salter Road, Poulan, GA 31781

49th Tact Ftr Wing (Spangdahlem AB, Germany, Football Team, 1961-1962), Sam Sardina, (315) 724-2351, sammysmall16@yahoo.com

50th Sig Bn R&M Co (Sendai, Japan, 1953-1955), Dick Downey, (480) 423-9414

81st Div (WWII), Darrel VanDyke, (214) 929-8128, darrelvan@gmail.com

86th Eng Bn (Const) (Fort Dix, NJ, Sept 1959-Jan 1962), Michael Sassaman, (518) 477-5284, msassaman@nycap.rr.com

91st Cbt Support Grp (Glasgow AFB, MT, 1966-1968), Gene Cavenaugh, (712) 579-0936, hootie@harlannet.com

208th MP Co (Fort Leonard Wood, MO, 1961-1963), Lenny Leone, (856) 983-8798

329th Topo Survey Co 542nd Eng BAS Survey (Wheelus AB, Libya, 1959-1962), Roger Landry, (281) 257-0638, colbyroger@yahoo.com

565th Trans (Vietnam, 1967-1968), Jacques "Pete" Pelloat, (985) 892-1664, pelloatm@yahoo.com

A Btry 7th Bn "Hawk" 5th Arty (South Korea, 1966-1968), Allen Wheeler, (616) 225-0072, alpamwheeler@gmail.com

***Belet* APD 109 (1944-1946),** Michael Sassaman, (518) 477-5284, msassaman@nycap.rr.com

C Co 2nd Bn 12th Cav (July 1965-Dec 1966), Ben Tuggle, (706) 614-0895, bentuggle@windstream.net

Co 116 (NTC San Diego, Jan-Mar 1951), Don Richardson, P.O. Box 594, Minden, LA 71058

HQ Co 9th Mar (Camp Sukiran, Okinawa, 1958-1960), Vernon Wittler, (712) 336-2466

HQ Co Army Aerial Support Ctr APO 253 (St. Andre d'Leure, France, 1962-1964), Alan Carter, (623) 977-4590

I Co 3rd Bn 318th Inf Rgt 80th Inf Div (Jan-May 1945), Edward Harris, (908) 685-0588

LCI 631 (Okinawa Gunto Opn), C.R. Rudisill, (513) 367-4691

Sampson, NY, NTC (Oct-Dec 1943), Larry "Rick" Ricciuto, (732) 244-2319

TAPS

Jerry L. Hedrick, Dept. of North Carolina. Dept. Cmdr. 1987-1988, Nat'l Advisory Cmte. to Nat'l Cmdr. Memb. 2005-2008, Nat'l Conv. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1997-1998, Nat'l Conv. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Chmn. 1998-2014, Nat'l Centennial Task Force for the Future Memb. 2011-2013, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 1994-2014, Nat'l Internal Affairs Cmsn. Memb. 1982-1983, Nat'l Internal Affairs Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1994-1997, Nat'l Mil. Affairs Cmte. Consultant 1988-1989, Nat'l Resolutions Subcmte. Memb. 1997-2000 and 2008-2009, Nat'l Resolutions Subcmte. Vice Chmn. 2001-2005, Nat'l Resolutions Subcmte. Chmn. 2005-2008 and 2009-2014, and Nat'l Subcmte. on Cmtes. Memb. 2000-2001.

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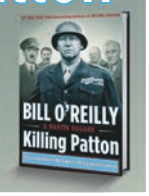

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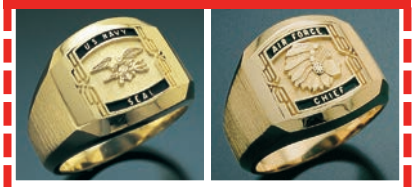

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That vegetarian is so hungry he could eat a horseradish.

MY FOOT fell asleep the other day. But I wasn't embarrassed until it started snoring.

A NEW DIET calls for eating nothing but garlic and onions. Everyone stays so far away that from a distance you look thinner.

TWO WOMEN were talking at a high-society party. "My ancestry goes all the way back to Alexander the Great," one said. "How far back has your line been traced?"

"I'm not sure," the second woman replied. "All our records were lost in the flood."

A BOY was sitting in his grandmother's kitchen, watching her prepare the Thanksgiving meal.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"Oh, I'm just stuffing the turkey," his grandmother replied.

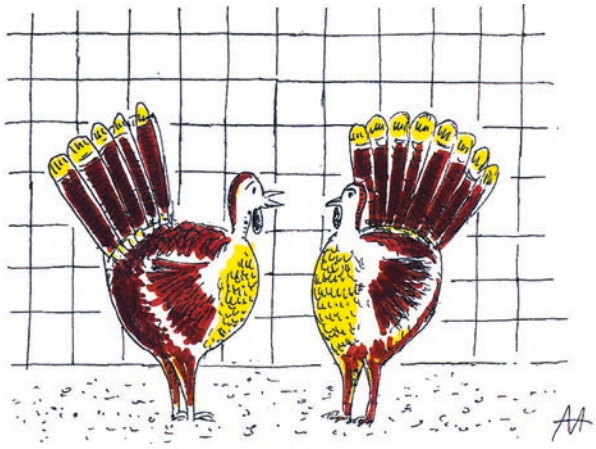
"Cool! Are you going to hang it next to the deer?"

THE PRO FOOTBALL TEAM had just finished practice when a large turkey came strutting onto the field. While the players gazed in amazement, the turkey walked up to the head coach and demanded a tryout.

Everyone stared in silence as the turkey caught pass after pass and ran right through the defensive line. When the turkey returned to the sidelines, the coach shouted, "You're terrific! Sign up for the season, and I'll see that you get a huge bonus."

"Forget the bonus," the turkey said. "Does the season go past Thanksgiving Day?"

WHY did the banker break up with his girlfriend? He lost interest.



"I'll be spending the holidays somewhere. I'm just not sure where."

"Rita, I've seen several people smiling today. Find out what that's all about."

"Bad news. All your tests came back with you as *delicious*."

A YOUNG MAN was trying hard to impress a girl.

"I was captain of our basketball team," he said. "I drive race cars and motorcycles. I can dance. I'm a good conversationalist. We'd have fun together!"

"Wow," the girl replied. "Do you have a group photo of yourself?"

A PET OWNER called the local police department to report a lost cat.

"Sorry, but that's not our job," the deputy said.

"You don't understand," the caller pleaded. "This is a very intelligent cat. He can practically talk."

"Then you'd better hang up, sir. He might be trying to call you right now."

"THE NEW YORK TIMES published an editorial calling on the federal government to legalize recreational marijuana. They don't really care about weed, it's just the only way they can keep selling papers." – *Jimmy Fallon*

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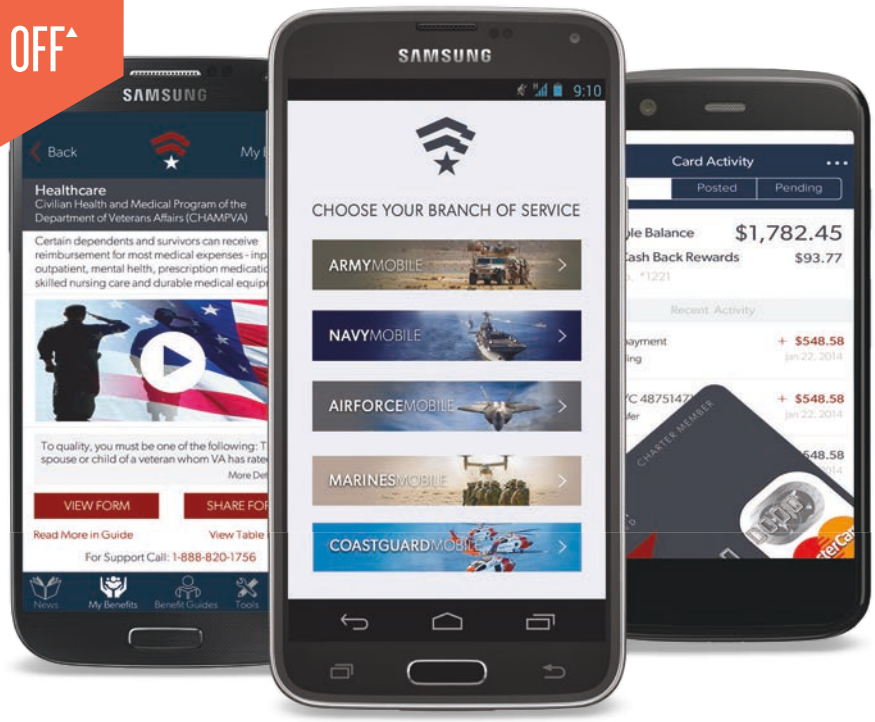

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